

The

# WHOLE TRUTH

Church of God in Christ

PURPOSED TO INSPIRE AND INFORM COGIC READERS AND CHRISTIANS EVERYWHERE

Since 1895



The Whole Truth Is Published Four Times A Year

July, August, September 2016

## HISTORIC DEDICATION

# Lelia Mason Building

and HERITAGE MUSEUM



## Legacy Conference RECAP & REVIEW

By Various Authors

## COGIC in JAPAN

By Reginal Boswell

## Lelia Mason Building Dedication

By Bishop David A. Hall, Sr.

# The WHOLE TRUTH

**Church of God in Christ**

PURPOSED TO INSPIRE AND INFORM COGIC  
READERS AND CHRISTIANS EVERYWHERE

Since 1895

Volume 121, Number 2



Copyright 2016 Church of God in Christ, Inc. All Rights Reserved. No part of this electronic magazine may be reproduced without the consent of the Church of God in Christ, Inc.

\*The views and opinions expressed within The Whole Truth are those of the writers and contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of The Church of God in Christ.

## Publishers

**Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.**  
Presiding Bishop

Bishop Phillip A. Brooks, II  
First Assistant Presiding Bishop

Bishop Jerry W. Macklin  
Second Assistant Presiding Bishop

Bishop Roy L.H. Winbush

Bishop George D. McKinney

Bishop Nathaniel W. Wells

Bishop Sedgwick Daniels

Bishop Frank O. White

Bishop J. Drew Sheard

Bishop Brandon Porter

Bishop Ted Thomas, Sr.

Bishop Lawrence M. Wooten

## Publishing Board

Pastor Mark Ellis, Chairman

## 1st Vice Chair

Elder Uleses Henderson, Jr.

## Vice Chair

Evang. Sandra S. Jones

## Secretary

Dr. Joe Chase, Jr.

## Members of the Board

Bishop E. Charles Connor

Bishop David Hall, Sr.

Bishop Welton Lawrence

Bishop O. L. Meadows

Stephen Savage

Reggie Witherspoon

Supt. Tony Campbell

Sabrina Ellis

Supervisor Grace Davis Harris

Dr. Phillip Jackson

## Executive Director, Public Relations Managing Editor, The Whole Truth

Robert E. Coleman, Jr.

## Editor

April Quillen

## Creative Director

Juan Roberts / Creative Lunacy

## Writers

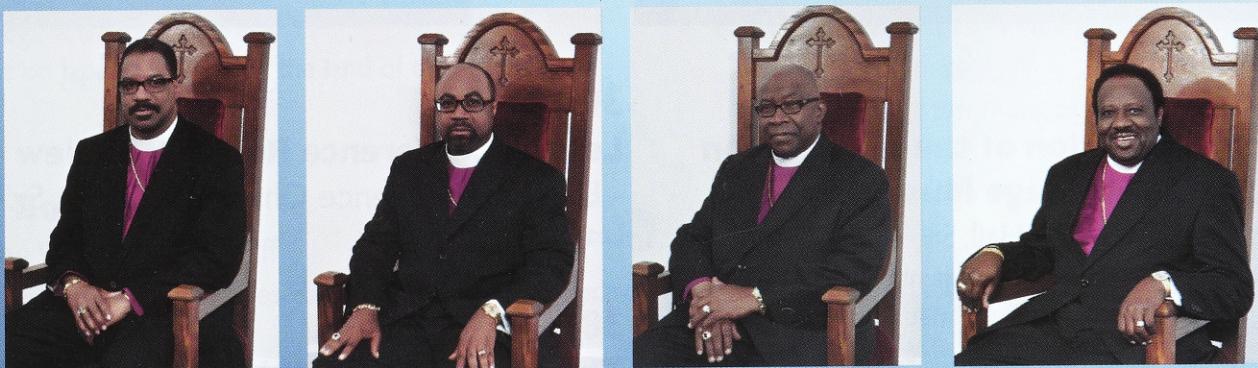
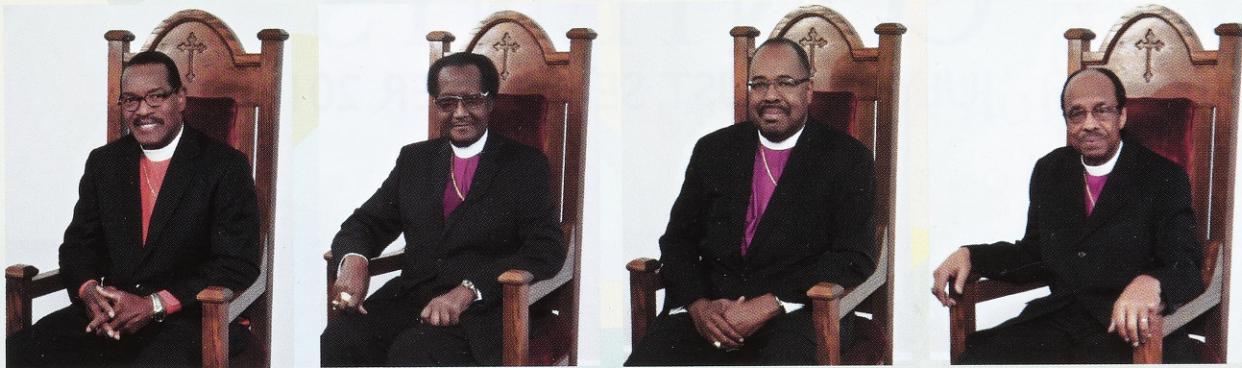
Chareá Batiste  
Reginald Boswell  
Sonya Bradford  
Daniele Cooper  
Rick Cunningham  
Marion McNair  
Queen Phillips  
DeLisa Reed  
Leonitta Turner

## Guest Writers

Lawrence Blake, Sr.  
Barbara Bryant  
Vickie Burse  
David Hall, Sr.  
Kyle Huckins

## Photographers

Nathan Brown  
Ronnie Donnelson  
Stephen Savage



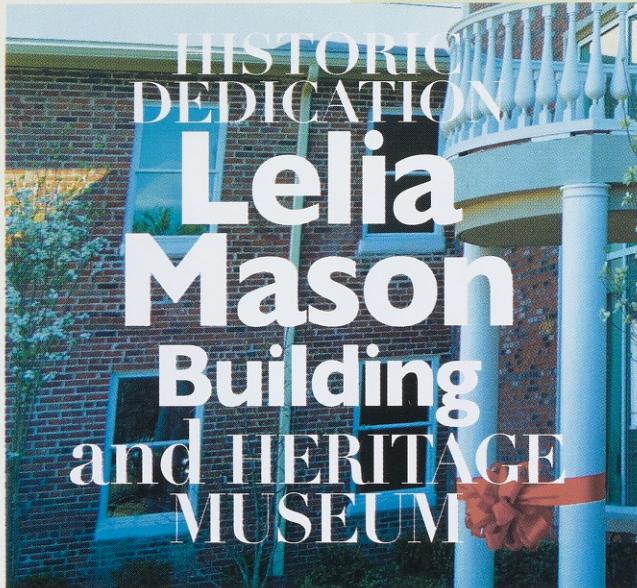
The  
General Board Members  
*of*  
The Church Of God In Christ, Inc.



# CONTENTS

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2016

12



30



12

## Historic Dedication of the Lelia Mason Building and Heritage Museum

– By Bishop David Allen Hall, Sr.

The old residence that served the saints during the era of segregation has now been reclaimed.

18

## Expressions of Praise

– By Missionary Chareá Batiste

Praise dancing should set both the congregation and the dancers free.

22

## God Is – By Daniele Cooper

This life is all about God and less about what I think I deserve.

26

## Legacy Conference Recap & Review

– By Supervisor Barbara Bryant

The Legacy of a visionary.

30

## Legacy Conference Recap & Review

– By Elder Lawrence Champion Blake, Sr.  
Learning from the best

38

## The Church and Politics: Can't Keep Silent

– By Leonitta Turner

The church needs to speak out and speak up!

40

## Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

– By Marion McNair

The Bible clearly commissions Christians to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

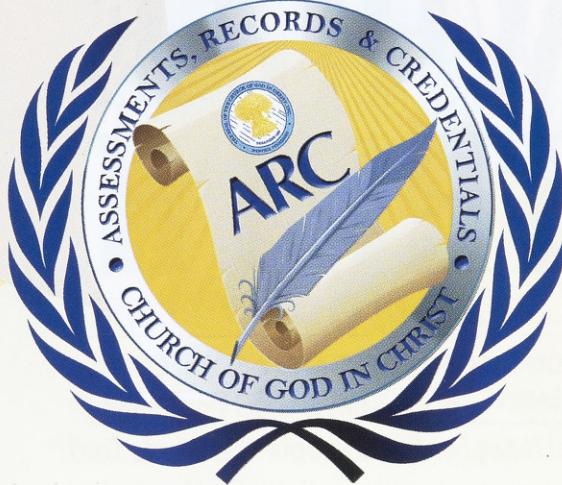
42

## Anointed to Handle Opposition

– By Queen Phillips

Opposition in any form is evidence that the kingdom of darkness is threatened by the Kingdom of Light.

**54**



**48**

### **TWT Presents: Global 82 (G82)**

– By Reginald Boswell

Highlight on Japan - COGIC in the land of the rising sun.

**50**

### **TWT Book Review**

– By The Whole Truth Staff

COGIC Elder/Journalist Tackles 'Race, Faith and Politics Today.'

**54**

### **ARC: ASSESSMENTS | RECORDS |**

### **CREDENTIALING – By Angela Clinton**

The official online portal for the General Secretary's Office.

**56**

### **Winning the Battlefield Called the Mind**

– By Elder Rick D. Cunningham

The mind is the last battlefield. Maintain control of your mind and you'll win the battle.

**58**

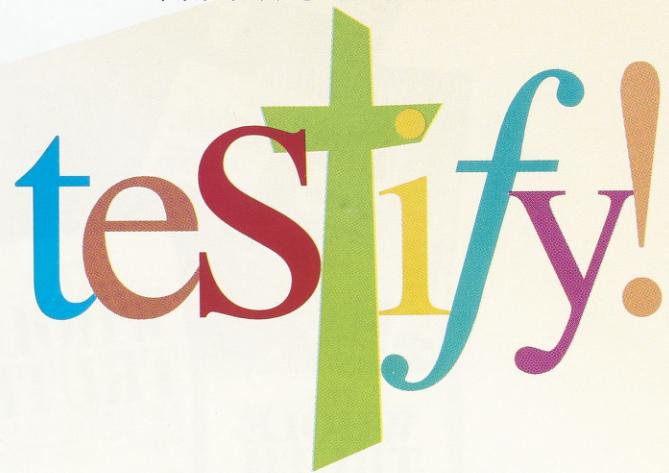
### **A Hot Date: Saturday Night Sunday**

### **School with Illinois First**

– By Sonya Bradford

Tune-in to a Saturday night class certain to enhance your traditional Sunday School experience!

**62** *The Whole Truth*  
INTRODUCES



**62**

### **The Whole Truth Presents Testify! How I Made It Through**

– By Vickie Burse

An empowering testimony of a mother's tragic loss and restoration.

**66**

### **TWT Church Spotlight**

– By Elder Kyle Huckins

Spotlight on Williams Temple and COGIC's Maine Jurisdiction.

**AVAILABLE IN DIGITAL OR PRINT!**



# The **WHOLE TRUTH**

*Church of God in Christ*

PURPOSED TO INSPIRE AND INFORM COGIC  
READERS AND CHRISTIANS EVERYWHERE

"Good News For God's People-The Whole Truth"

**The Whole Truth predates the Church Of God In Christ as a Pentecostal Church. Bishop Charles Harrison Mason founded the newspaper entitled "Truth" in the late 1890's. The goal of the newspaper then, just as the goal of the eMagazine now, is to inspire and to inform.**

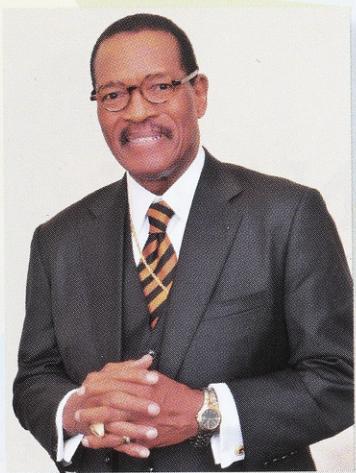
**The Whole Truth remains the official organ of the Church, is serving in an expanded role and has a great legacy. Today, as an eMagazine, its pages are here to record, for current readers and generations to come, what the Church Of God In Christ is doing.**

## COGIC's #1 Urban Christian eMagazine

- Intelligent
- Multi-Generational
- Spiritual
- Practical
- Informative
- COGIC

**Subscribe Today!**

## From The Desk of Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.



*"Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck."*

—Proverbs 1:8-9

Greetings Dear Readers:

I pray God's choicest blessings upon each of you. As we anticipate the 2016 Auxiliaries In Ministry (AIM) Convention, I am reminded of the importance of encouraging our youth, and always demonstrating love to them when guiding and giving positive instruction.

On an annual basis, the AIM Convention happens to be the second largest convention for ages 12-21 years, and the third largest convention after the Holy Convocation and Women's International Convention, respectively. With this in mind, what a wonderful opportunity we have to influence and inspire a large portion of our Church of God in Christ youth during AIM.

Remembering the spiritual guidance that we were once given, either by parents or influential persons within the Kingdom, let us not forget that our youth will soon carry on the work that our forefathers began. It is our duty, therefore, to instruct them in the way that is right, utilizing exciting, contemporary ways that they will understand and by sharing relevant tools that they will firmly grasp.

And to our youth attending this year's AIM Convention, I challenge you to truly experience all that the convention offers, not only socially, but by taking full advantage of the opportunities to learn and to catapult your own personal relationship with Christ, in order to ultimately change and enrich your life.

In His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles E. Blake".

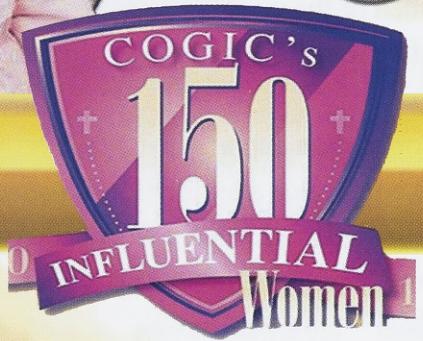
Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.  
Presiding Bishop  
Church of God In Christ, Inc.  
*The Seventh In Succession*





MISSIONARY

Peggy  
Smith



The Pastor and Members of Bethlehem COGIC extends heartfelt congratulations to our Beloved First Lady, Missionary Peggy Smith, Kansas East Jurisdictional Sunday School Field Representative, on being nominated as one of 2015's "150 Most Influential Women" of the Church of God in Christ.

We are overwhelmingly proud of this achievement, in recognition of your dedication and devotion to God, the Church and the community, and feel that you are most deserving of this high honor.

May God continue to bless you, as you venture on to accomplish even greater things for the Kingdom. We love you, First Lady Smith!

*Bethlehem Church of God in Christ*

206 Spencer Street, Council Grove, Kansas 66846

*Elder Jim L. Smith, Pastor*

## LETTER from the EDITOR



### An Exciting Season for COGIC!

Dear TWT Readers:

So far each year, the summer edition of *The Whole Truth* has proven to be my favorite. It signifies the exciting season where COGIC saints, young and seasoned, gear up for one of the largest conventions of the year – the always highly anticipated AIM Convention.

The AIM Convention is one that demonstrates the very diverse offerings of our great church, with auxiliaries showcasing their best and working diligently to teach and harvest thirsty souls.

This year, *The Whole Truth* would like to extend an enthusiastic CONGRATULATIONS to Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., President Linwood Dillard, and the entire AIM Convention committee, for 40 blessed years of ministry and service to the Lord's people as the former United National Auxiliaries Convention (UNAC), and the present Auxiliaries in Ministry (AIM). We pray that the entire 2016 time of gathering in Cincinnati, Ohio will be enjoyably blessed and showered by the Spirit of the Lord.

As you travel to AIM, we encourage you, our subscribers, to access your digital version of TWT to read in-flight or perhaps as an auto passenger. With stories such as "Historic Dedication of the Lelia Mason Building and Heritage Museum" by Bishop David Allen Hall, Sr., "COGIC in Japan" by Reginald Boswell, and an incredible review of the 2016 Legacy Conference by various authors, you're sure to pass the time quickly, all while being inspired and informed!

As always, we sincerely pray that you are strengthened and encouraged by this issue, and that something within these pages draws you closer to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

By His Grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "April E. Quillen".

April E. Quillen



*Vote* MOTHER  
SYLVIA LAW

**NATIONAL TRUSTEE BOARD**  
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

- Over 45 years of Service to the COGIC
- COGIC Charities Treasurer
- Former COGIC CFO
- Chair, COGIC Charities Scholarship Committee
- Former member COGIC Publishing Bd.
- MBA, Accounting
- Doctorate Business Administration
- Evangelist Missionary

**IT'S THE LAW!**

# “Race, Faith and Politics Today”

*by COGIC Elder Kyle Huckins, Ph.D.*

This book by Huckins, journalist and preacher, has more than 125 of his nationally award-winning columns with Scripture, research and interviews on today's issues, including:

- Police-related violence
- Attacks on black believers
- Rise of Donald Trump
- Muslim extremism
- Creationism, abortion & many more

Also get articles on Christian living, theology and worldview, topics such as:

- Salvation & sanctification
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Endtimes prophecy
- Profiles of Christian leaders

COGIC PR Head Robert Coleman: “Exceptional”  
Evangelical Press Association: “This writer does  
have a distinctive force ... decisive ... that teaches”



*Prepare for the election, activism and God's agenda*

*Buy for just \$11.99 each!*

*Get six and receive a free copy and companion Bible study*

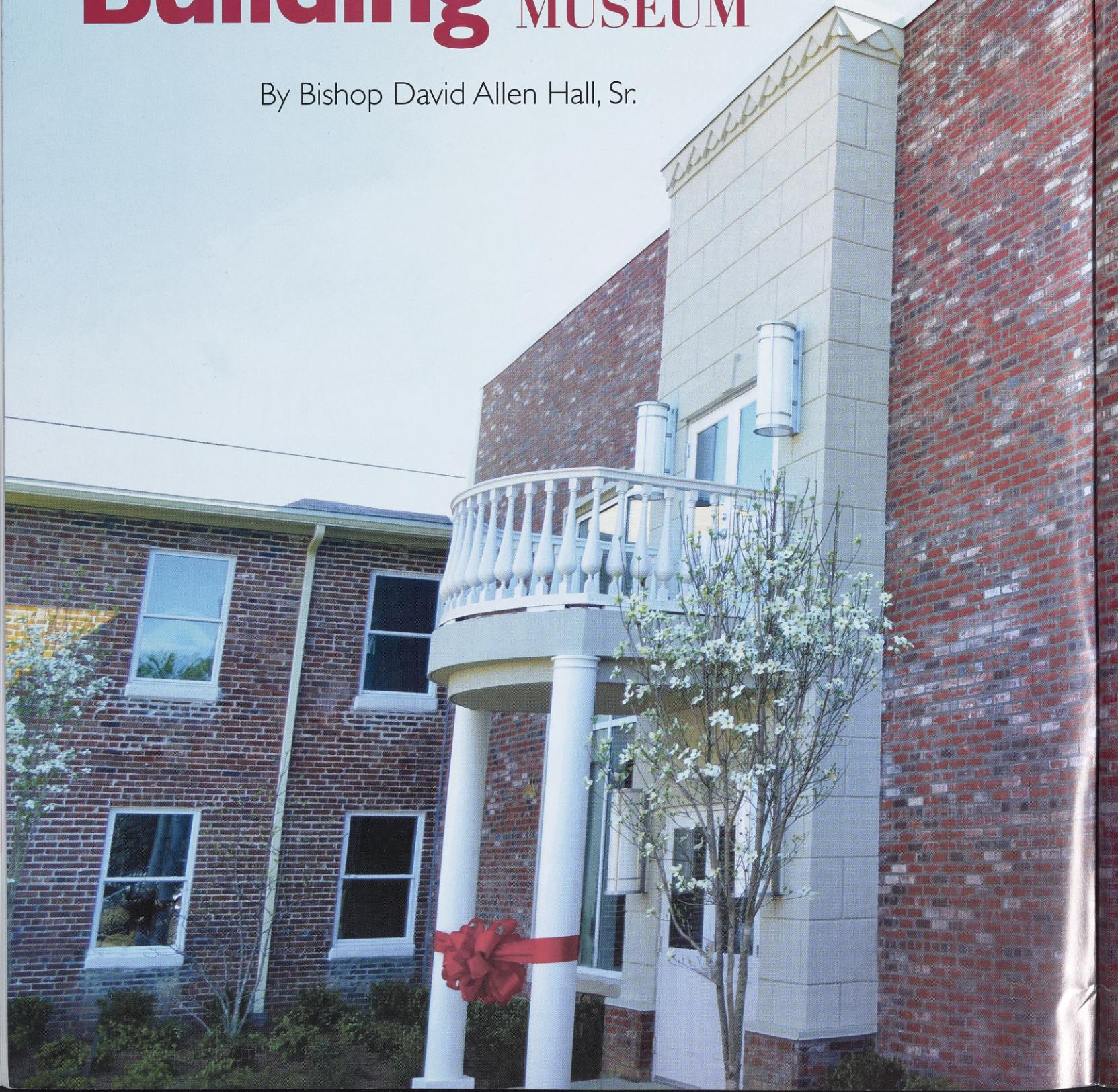
*Ordering & info: [www.racefaithandpoliticstoday.com](http://www.racefaithandpoliticstoday.com)*

HISTORIC DEDICATION



# Lelia Mason Building and HERITAGE MUSEUM

By Bishop David Allen Hall, Sr.





It was a cool, crisp, and sunny day – April 7, 2016 - the day that the Church Of God In Christ dedicated the new Lelia Mason Building. The old residence that served the saints during the era of segregation has now been reclaimed by this generation. According to noted Church Historian, Bishop David Daniels, Ph.D., this building on Fifth Street had been used as a “colored hospital” before it was purchased by Bishop Charles Harrison Mason. Upon the acquisition of the property, Bishop Mason used the building as lodging for the saints during the Holy Convocation and also for administrative office space. For that day and time, the purchase was progressive and positioned the Church Of God In Christ as a mainstay among Black religious organizations. Under the visionary leadership of Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr. and the administration and guidance of First Assistant Presiding Bishop P.A. Brooks, that dilapidated facility is now renovated with a newly erected multipurpose media center and archival section.

The entire Church leadership and other delegates to the General Assembly gathered on the parking lot of Mason Temple to experience the making of history. Consequently, more than 500 individuals from around the world attended the dedication. The descendants of Bishop Charles and Mother Lelia Mason were also present and witnessed the faith and dreams of the diminutive founder and spiritual giant, Charles Mason, embraced and reaffirmed. Though he never accomplished the task of reno-

a sense of emotional and existential pride the early church had! From their pennies, nickels, and dimes, those poorly educated people provided shelter from the storms and chaos of segregation, from hatred, and from simply being relegated to the margins of society.

Throughout the years, busloads of tourists have visited the sacred grounds of Mason Temple. Memphis is the Jerusalem of the Church Of God In Christ and Mason Temple is veneration as an historical and spiritual site. Presiding Bishop



vating the purchase, his spiritual children proved a sobering reality “that all things work together for good to them who love the Lord.” Therefore, the General Church provided what Bishop Mason intended when he purchased the land, which was an essential and vital way to reinforce our identity and a sense of security from the hostile world. Simply stated, “the colored people” had a brick and mortar place to stay. As a place that we owned, it provided meaning to Mason’s fledgling organization. What

Blake stated, “The buildings on this campus were a reproach to the Church Of God In Christ. Mason Temple is known for being historic and a modern day construction miracle. During World War II, its construction was doubtful, due to the complexities and scarcities of the war, but God touched government officials, and they provide steel for construction. The building’s condition was not in accord with the expectations and purpose of a progressive and growing church. This effort demonstrates that



God takes lives that were wrecks and makes them useful, and it was with that same attitude and commitment we, ourselves, conceived the Lelia Mason project." Bishop Blake also recognized the diligent work of Bishop Sedgwick Daniels in the renovation of the John Lee Building and thanked those assembled for the prayers and the financial support that made the Lelia Mason venture successful.

The renovation of the property was a collaboration between a dedicated committee, headed by Dr. Lytia Howard, Quality Assurance chairperson, Bishop P.A. Brooks and Superintendent Darin Burns, project manager. This trio was meticulous in their control and implementation of every detail. On a weekly basis, Bishop Brooks, a venerable gentleman who is wise in his corporate administrative style, called the area bishops and jurisdictional officials together to walk through the building projects. These regular walk-throughs provided connectional and organizational commitment to the process. The Chris Woods Construction Company provided the construction and followed the excellent plans of the renowned African American architectural firm, Self Tucker Architects of Memphis. Mr. Woods and company were cost effective and liberal with their time, providing an economy of scale that proved the resulting work had more value than the dollars spent.

Bishop Brooks stood before the saints, echoed the same, and paid great respect and appreciation to Superintendent Burns for his management of the project. As project manager, Burns carried considerable responsibility and flew from Detroit weekly to keep the pace of production and cost in line, while both renovating the old building and constructing the new adjacent structure. To God be the glory for Supt. Burns' devotion and how he dedicated his services free of charge for the length of the entire project. When Supt. Burns was presented and offered a few remarks, he simply uttered with tearful joy, "All I want to do is serve!" Certainly, his efforts demonstrated that the character of present day COGIC members is not unlike the saints of old. Burns clearly loves the Church Of God In Christ.

The end results of the labor is impressive! The project to renovate and build the two-story annex, the COGIC Heritage Museum, was a two year building project. In total, the facility is 14,000 square feet and offers an array of utility, consisting of a hospitality area, a coffee bar, the theatre, Mason Family History Room, the Museum and exhibition space, the Souvenir Shop, a state of the art IT Hub, two Smart classrooms, the Technology Lab, flexible conference and event infrastructure for meetings, and other inventive usages. The opportunity for enhanced storage of historic artifacts and the latest

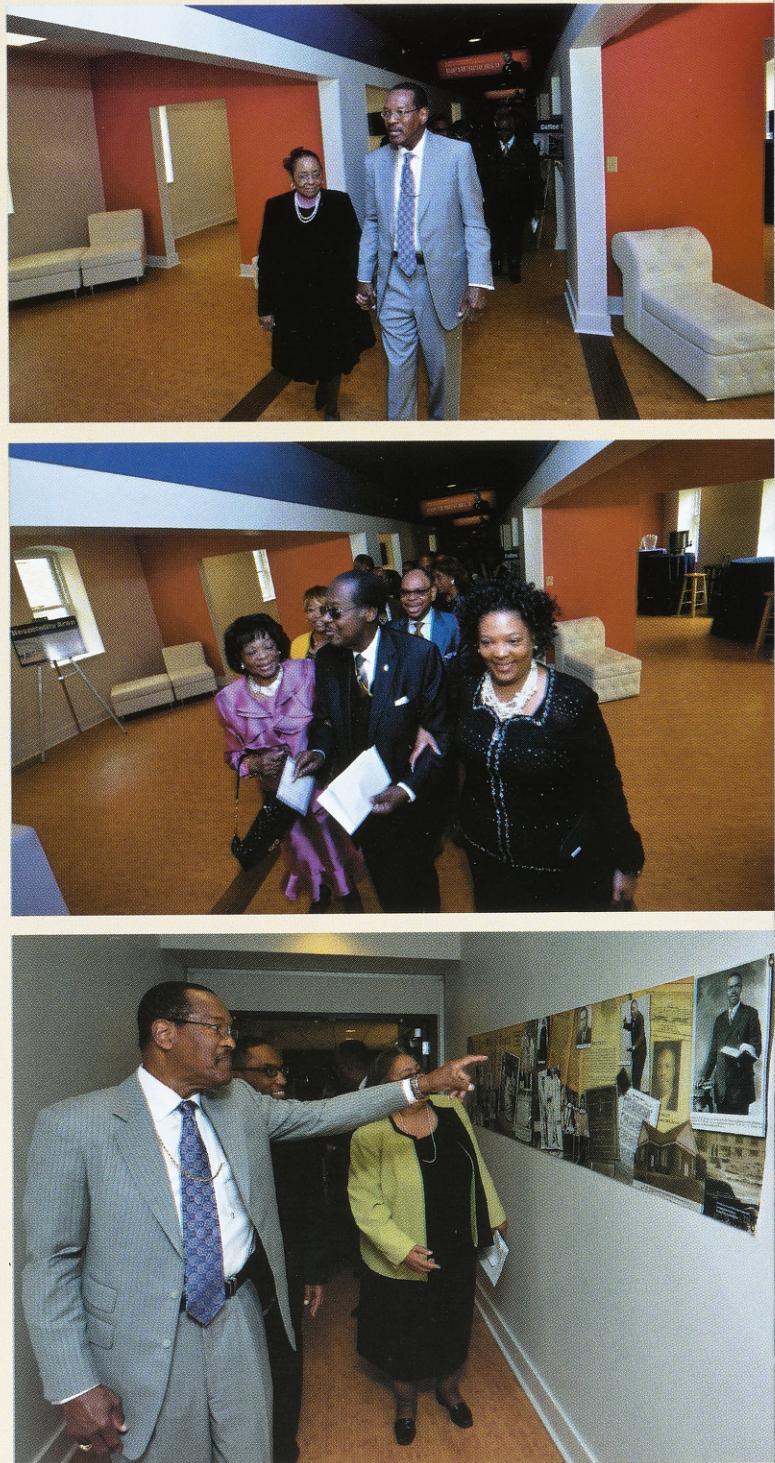


inventory and catalogue of today's accomplishments shall be accurately preserved there. As for the future, the building offers immense capacity for full WIFI, Broadband, and Cable Coax for enhanced telecommunications. What our Presiding Bishop has done will ultimately allow the Church Of God In Christ to stand head and shoulders with any organization for reaching the world with our message. This generation has taken the legacy handed to us and advanced the cause of Christ.

Not only are the buildings technically among the best, they add an aesthetic value to the South Memphis area. The grounds of the campus present order and beauty and the professional quality of the landscaping is awesome, which includes a lovely area for sitting. The value of the campus is a sense of godly pride. It suggests that COGIC has a commitment and perspective that will exemplify to coming generations that our genuine heart is for service. Now saints can come from around the world and appreciate the character, intellect, the camaraderie of fellowship, and the fundamental quality of our approach to salvation.

The remaining responsibility of opening and paying for the buildings is immediate. The meticulous work done daily by the project committee has assured that the Church Of God In Christ will have adequate space for future expansion. It is time for all saints to make the final monetary contributions to pay off the note. Our Church is active and serving in every state in America and in seventy nine countries around the globe. The Presiding Bishop is certain that Bishop Brooks will not rest until the building effort is paid in full. The Presiding Bishop commented, "He [Bishop Brooks] has not exhausted his energies. Stand next to him and he will ask you to contribute again. He is selling commemorative bricks and has many workable ideas to retire the debt." Bishop Blake has contributed more than \$200,000 in leading the total renovation efforts, including the Lee Building. Each member of the General Board, jurisdictional bishops, General Church officials, Women's Department, and saints from everywhere have made contributions. The committee will provide historic markers on the premises to adequately commemorate these donations. The expressed desire communicated by Bishop Brooks comes from the heart. Bishop Brooks wants to pay the total building project off with expediency. The entire Church should rally to the cause and

cheer him on with singleness of mind to pay for the effort. The announcement of additional programmatic activities is forthcoming to make the liquidation of this project a reality. **TWT**



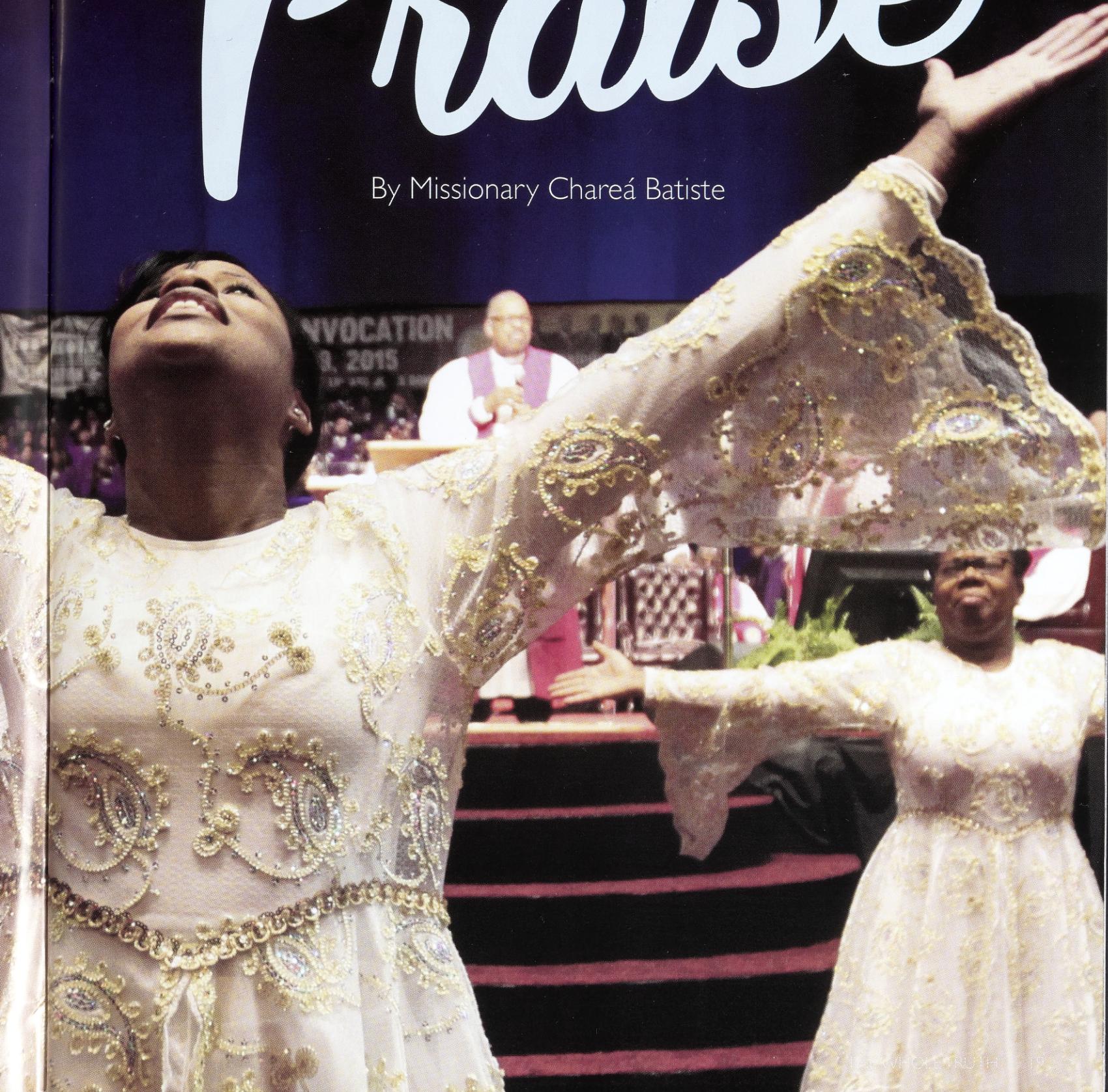
Bishop David A. Hall, Sr. is pastor of the Temple COGIC in Memphis, TN and prelate of the Tennessee Headquarters Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

# EXPRESSIONS OF



# Praise

By Missionary Chareá Batiste



Arms lifted high, legs moving to the beat, flags and streamers twirling in the air—all of this describes the powerful ministry of praise dancing. Though praise dancing is not a new phenomenon, it has exploded in more recent years and can be found in many churches and denominations across America. Today, praise dance involves so many different aspects that it cannot be contained in a box. Praise dance is diverse because church members are diverse.

Under the umbrella of praise dance, a variety of elements exist. For instance, some groups include miming or sign language in their praise dance. Others use streamers, flags, and banners. Uniforms range from flowing dresses and garments to more casual matching gear. The praise dancers may minister through traditional gospel songs that move the soul, or contemporary Christian music that makes the heart leap with joy. Indeed, one can even find youth rallies in which praise dancers move energetically to the gospel hip hop of artists such as Lecrae or Canton Jones. Both males and females, young and old, can be found using this expression of art and praise. Simply put, praise dancing is a ministry like no other.

When I was a young girl, I was encouraged to join a sign language praise dance team. The thought of being part of a group that would dance in front of an entire congrega-

tion filled me with nervousness and fear. After much convincing, I joined the group and it turned out to be one of the best and most impactful decisions of my life. I never lost my nervousness when praise dancing, but I did gain a newfound way of sharing my love toward God. When I twirled, bowed, lifted my arms, and moved to the music, I gave it my all, show-

for the Lord, gave me a feeling that was simply indescribable. Praise dance is indeed a ministry, but it has not always been viewed in this way.

In its infancy, praise dancing was not embrac-

ed by all churches, namely because dancing was seen as only being secular. And,

yes,

while some

elements of dance can indeed be secular, not all of it is. When praise dancing is done with a combination of modesty and ministry, it is a powerful art form that allows individuals to express their love for God. Some may argue that all dancing is a sin or that dancing is not biblical, but this is an untrue belief. Dancing is actually embraced and encouraged in the Bible, and it is mentioned twenty times in the New King James version. One such example is Psalm 150:4, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance." How can dance be considered a sin when the Bible expressly tells us that this is a way we can praise God? Dancing in and of itself, therefore, is not a sin; praise dancers simply need to be mindful that their dance gives glory to God and not inappropriate attention to themselves.

One young lady shared with me her views about praise dance. Icelisia Tolbert is a part of the anointed praise dance ministry at Progressive

# Arms



ering God with the highest praise and honor. Countless times during the dance, the song would minister to me, just as it did to the people, and tears would freely flow from my eyes. The exhilaration of praise dance, combined with my adoration

COGIC in Sacramento, California (Superintendent Bennie Toliver, pastor). She says,

**"PRAISE DANCE IS MORE THAN JUST A SET OF MOVEMENTS. IT IS A REFLECTION OF WHO YOU ARE AND THE LIFE YOU LIVE. WITHOUT SAYING ANY WORDS, YOUR TESTIMONY SPEAKS AND MOVES THROUGH YOU IN A WAY THAT SETS YOU APART FROM OTHERS."**

Icelisia explains how praise dance ministry speaks to her: "I have to let the song minister to me first so that God can use me to minister to others. I believe I am just a vessel, and when I am dancing, I am invisible. It is not a selfish act of vain glory, but a selfless moment of honor and glory that belongs to God."

Another individual I spoke to had much to say about the importance of praise dance ministry. Missionary Marian Williams is president of the Expressions of Praise dance ministry at Greater Victory Temple COGIC in Seaside, California (Elder Ronald Britt, pastor). Mis-

sionary Williams following: 149:3 says let them praise Him in the dance. Praise dancing to me is our outward expression of our inward worship. While working with the youth praise

stated the "Psalm

God. Let ev-  
that has breath  
the Lord!"

erything  
praise ye



dancers, we fast, pray, and consecrate ourselves before the Lord before ministering in the dance. The anointing comes not to entertain, but to destroy the yoke and set the captive free. Our worship is, and should always be, real before our Holy

As the above quotes demonstrate, praise dancing is more than a set of movements. It is not a platform for showing off dance moves and rhythm. It is not a performance simply meant to entertain. When done with the right spirit and the right heart, praise dance is a ministry that heals, delivers, and sets both the congregation and the dancers free. The next time you see praise dance going forth in your church, focus your attention and immerse yourself in God's presence, rather than on the dancers' movements to the song. You might even get so caught up in the Spirit that you end up doing your own Holy Ghost dance. After all, when praise dance goes forth, you are invited to praise God too! **TWT**

Missionary Chareá Batiste is a TWT guest writer who attends New Beginnings Community Church. Her hometown roots belong to Greater Victory Temple COGIC in Seaside, CA (Elder Ronald Britt, pastor) formerly under the leadership of Bishop W.W. Hamilton, jurisdictional prelate emeritus and General Board secretary emeritus.

A Pastoral Statement *on the*

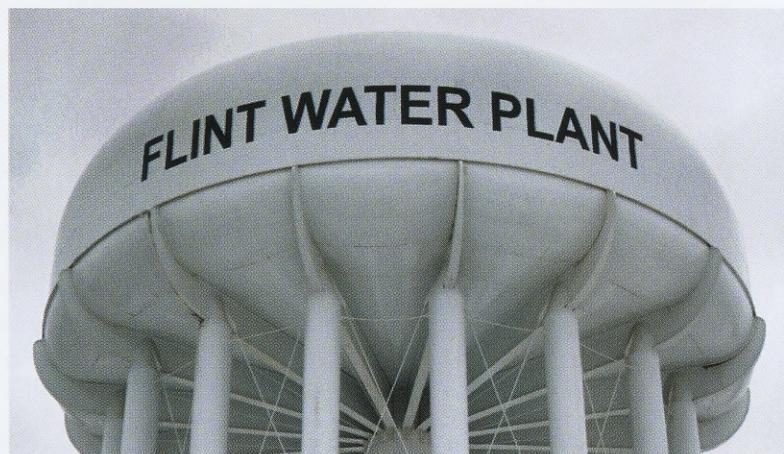
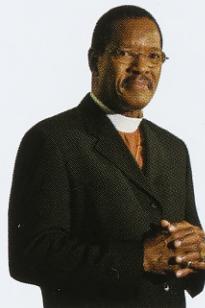
# CRISIS in FLINT MICHIGAN

*and*

## The Challenge of Environmental Racism



Bishop Charles E. Blake  
Presiding Bishop  
Church of God in Christ



Jesus Christ, our Lord and the model for our lives, showed special concern for the weak and the defenseless. He commanded us, the church, to do the same: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matt. 25:40). In view of this charge, the leadership of the Church of God in Christ cannot stand silent as the innocent children of Flint, MI and their parents suffer the ravages of poi-

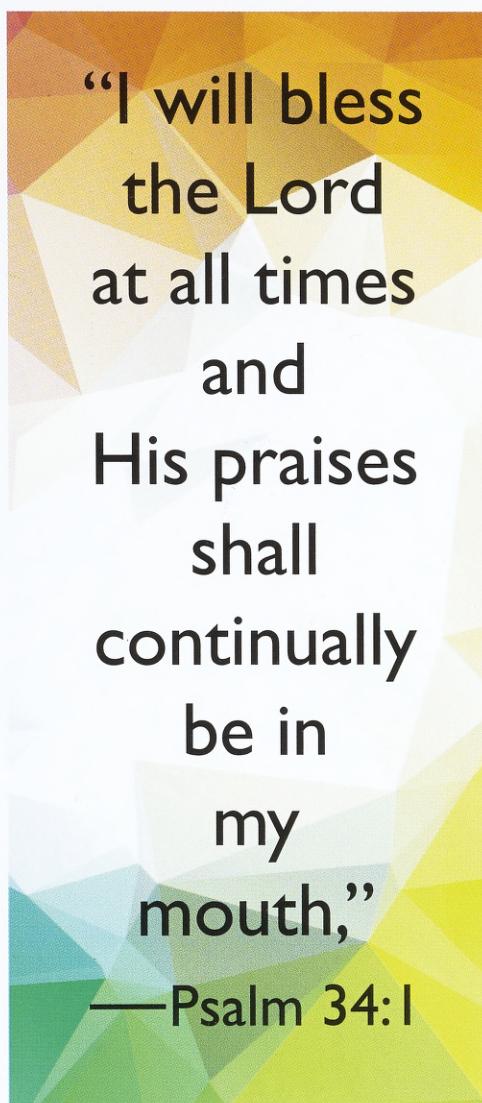
sonous water. We stand with these parents, and with all the residents of Flint, to call for the speedy, permanent restoration of clean drinking water.

Governor Snyder and the state of Michigan are largely responsible for the terrible disaster in Flint. An emergency manager, Ed Kurtz, appointed by the governor, made the initial decision to switch the city's water supply from Detroit and Lake Huron to the Flint



In the midst of the circumstance, I was reminded of Psalm 34. When I read the first chapter, it reminded me that this life is all about God and less about what I think I deserve. Reading Psalm 34:1, "I will bless the Lord at all times and His praises shall continually be in my mouth," confirmed that what I was facing was an event that God was bringing me through to be a testament of His goodness, His healing, and His ability to do the impossible in a limitless world. Follow that encouraging word with Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." So in all that you are going through, dealing with or have fallen under pressure to...LET IT GO! Relax in the hands of our unfailing God. Enjoy your journey and don't allow circumstances to kill you mentally, emotionally or physically. Let life's "adventures" guide you to a place where you can hear God better and be positioned in the place where He can have better use of you.

Up until a few months ago I always hid behind the scenes. When an uncomfortable circumstance would arise, I would show my public face and hide my private tears. All in all, I knew the call upon my life and the gift God had given me. Yet I still found myself COMFORTABLE. It was hard for me to move out of my way and move to where God needed me to be. It was easier to live a quiet life, instead of doing what I knew God was calling for me to do. Then, without warning (in my eyes), I had a stroke on my dining room floor. HUH? I can tell you that



God will surely get your attention. I'm in my thirties, healthy, and one month after having my daughter, I lost the ability to clearly speak, my memory was fading, and an outlook for a happy ending seemed unclear. This is when Psalm 34:1 became my guiding light for where God needed me to be. It was time that I stopped my mind from twirling in an abyss of my thoughts and bless the Lord at ALL times.

It is only because of God that I am still here in an able body and a functioning mind. Yes, I had a stroke and yes, doctors were uncertain if I would be alright. But in less than two months, God brought healing to my body. Glory to the God that we serve! I can tell you that God IS a HEALER, He IS a DELIVERER, and He will certainly do what others say can't be done. As I move farther on the path that God

has for me, I want to live a greater life for Him and use this to testify of His glory. My brother and my sister, just as God brought me through this matter, I believe He is working on your behalf as well. Trust God and have faith that He will guide you to where He needs you to be. Because whatever you're going through... it belongs to God.

God is all that we need to live this life (in spite of what we are going through). And all that we go through brings glory to His wonderful name. **TWT**

Daniele Cooper is a member of Greater Pentecostal COGIC in Wichita, KS where Superintendent Herman Hicks is the pastor and Anadina Hicks is the first lady.



---

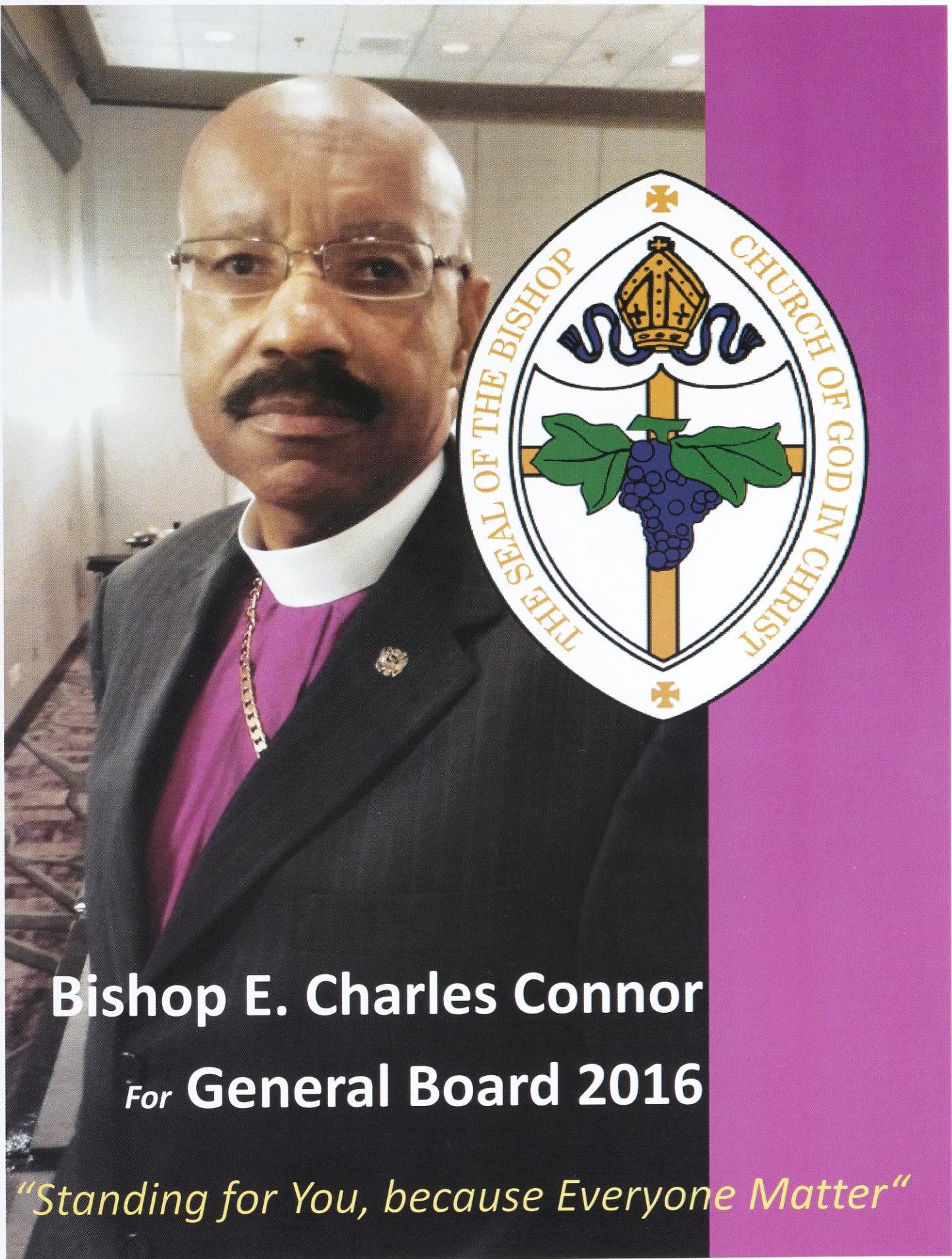
## *Isaiah 35:1-2*

---

The **desert** and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God.

*I see tomorrow and it includes you!*

**Bishop E. Charles Connor for General Board 2016**



Bishop E. Charles Connor  
*For General Board 2016*

*"Standing for You, because Everyone Matter"*

*The*  
**WHOLE  
TRUTH**

Recap & Review

LEGACY of a  
**VISIONARY**

of Legacy Conference 2016

By Supervisor Barbara Bryant



Lady Mae Blake was a picture of elegance, adorned in a lovely light pink suit as she stepped to the pulpit to share the incredible journey she made with her husband and prominent leader of the Church of God in Christ, Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr.

A dynamic speaker, she took us behind-the-scenes for a glimpse into their lives, sharing stories that captured the audience's attention, as she spoke of her time as the first lady of the West Angeles Church of God in Christ, and her marriage to Bishop Blake.

The session titled, "Lady Mae Speaks" was held Thursday, March 17, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at the West Angeles North Campus in Los Angeles, California. Greeting the cheering audience of over 2000 attendees, Lady Mae spoke of her passion for God, family and the church, detailing the events that helped shape her life experiences.

It was clear that her words had a profound impact on listeners, so much so that in the end, they wanted more.

Her powerful speech began with the captivating story of the young man who worked to attract her attention so many years ago, leading to their marriage and faithful service to God, even through the many challenges facing the fledgling church community. She mentioned the early struggles of a rare visionary leader who continued to succeed and execute God's plan in the face of difficult times.

Unwaveringly loyal, she praised her husband as a man of integrity who has always done the right thing, even when no one was watching. She went on to say that while some leaders engage in retaliation against their critics, the Bishop will not speak an unkind word, even against his enemies. His behavior and character in public

and private are always consistent. At one point she said, "At times I want to help him out when I learn of someone criticizing him, but he always tells me he doesn't need my help, so I just pray."

Most of us have a difficult time believing that God is working on our behalf until we see something happen with our natural eyes, but not Lady Mae. Very early in ministry, she understood that prayer was the key to powerful living and victory. Emphasizing the importance of praying for our husbands, she added, "I don't have a war room. My entire house is a war house."

Despite ups and down, critics and faultfinders, they built two churches and saw God multiply and accelerate growth from fifty members in 1969 to a remarkable 22,000 members in 2016. Lady Mae energized the audience when she mentioned the goodness of Jesus and suddenly shouted, "Thank you,



Jesus!" The Spirit of God swept through the church auditorium, and she took full advantage of His presence. She paused in her presentation and took a moment to stroll across the pulpit, lifting her hands to acknowledge His presence and give Him glory.

When she regained her composure, Lady Mae announced



to the enemy that his lies would not destroy her husband's legacy. Excited about such genuine transparency and passion, the audience leaped to their feet and gave her a resounding round of applause.

Bishop Blake often refers to her as his "secret weapon," and it's abundantly clear why Lady Mae has been such a powerful force for change in the life of Bishop Blake, the West Angeles Church and the Church of God in Christ. She is known as a behind-the-scenes force of the beautiful decor that is displayed within and outside the lovely structure of the West Angeles Cathedral.

Often quiet and reserved, prim and proper, she steps into her element as she shares her extraordinary journey as wife of Bishop Blake and first lady of West Angeles Church.

It's clear that Lady Mae inspires listeners with the incredible truth that we indeed serve a powerful God, for whom nothing is impossible. With that in mind, she boldly speaks into the lives of others, encouraging them to move



in sync with the Holy Spirit, and take back the ground the devil has stolen from God's people.

The power of Lady Mae's leadership and community to embolden and vitalize women to achieve their full potential is massive. She has a clear vision for a better future. She is a progressive female leader who is gifted to help other women soar, and I would



echo others in saying she is one of the most influential women in COGIC history.

The men and women departed Lady Mae L. Blake's session feeling highly inspired, empowered and encouraged.

**TWT**

Barbara Bryant is a jurisdictional supervisor for Southern California Evangelistic Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction. She is a contributing writer to the Los Angeles Sentinel and Minister Voice Magazine in Southern and Northern California. To learn more about Barbara, please visit [www.barbarabryant.com](http://www.barbarabryant.com).

*The*  
**WHOLE  
TRUTH**

Recap & Review

LEARNING from  
**THE BEST**

of Legacy Conference 2016

By Elder Lawrence Champion Blake, Sr.

Years ago, Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr. wrote a book entitled,



## “Dreamers Are Coming.”

In this book, he spoke about a legacy of dreamers that was to come. In March of 2015, it was a blessing to see the dreamers who attended Bishop Blake’s first Legacy Conference. The conference was geared toward the next generation of ministers who desired to sit at the feet of the presiding bishop and receive direct counsel from his heart. As his son, it was a blessing to see and understand the magnitude of our great leader. With godly wisdom, Bishop Blake has stood the test of time and his ministry has been an extreme example for all ministers to seek to understand.

During the conference, I was blessed to have words concerning

my father, to whom I often refer as “the greatest man I know.” Years ago, I came to understand how important Bishop Blake is to the world, actually watching him become who he is now. While most children seek their parents’ attention, I sought to become part of what my father was doing, in order to have more time with him. If you want to spend time with someone who is changing the world, do not do so by attempting to stop their work. Instead, get on their program and HELP them work.

I am not surprised at the attendance turnout for the Legacy Conference, which was a successful event because, from what I witnessed, everyone left full and satisfied. It

was wonderful to see many ministers that were secure enough to listen and learn from another minister, which was one of Bishop Blake’s focuses as he addressed us all in the main session of the conference. “If you can’t follow, you can’t possibly know how to lead,” he said. It’s a wonderful thing when a person can teach humility, especially when humility is one of their strongest traits. That is why so many people came to hear from the mouth of one of God’s greatest servants of our day.

Bishop Blake also spoke about the generosity of the minister and as we all know, generosity is also one of Bishop Blake’s greater qualities. A good teacher can teach everything because their life actually

preaches, as a living example, and compliments the gospel they're preaching. Bishop also touched on being considerate of the people to whom we minister because the purpose of a minister is to serve God's people, rather than the reverse.

Lady Mae Blake also gave heartfelt words, expressing to the audience how she has never heard or seen Bishop Blake say or do anything unkind in her life. It's a blessing when an entire family can agree on the fact that the head of the house has been a magnificent leader, full of integrity, honesty, and having a godly love that never disappears.

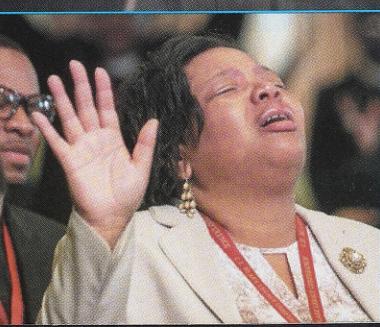
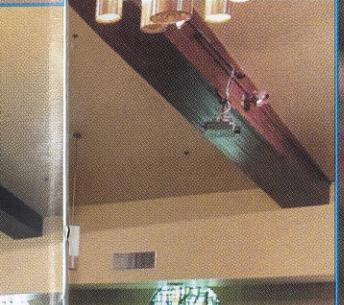
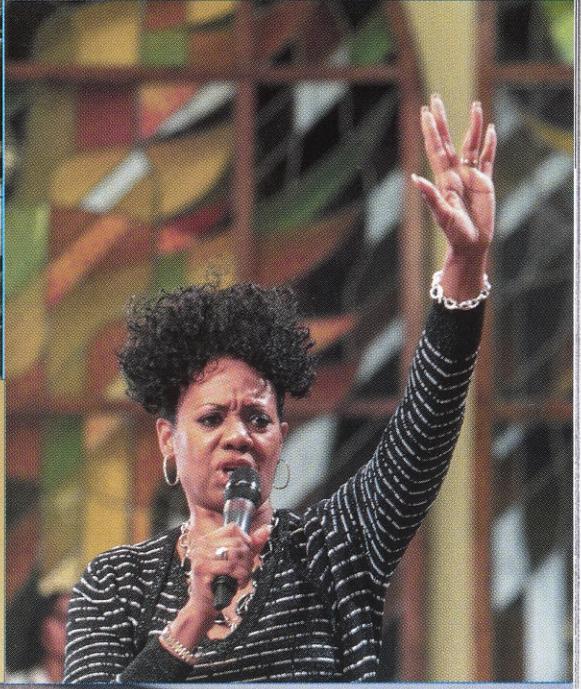
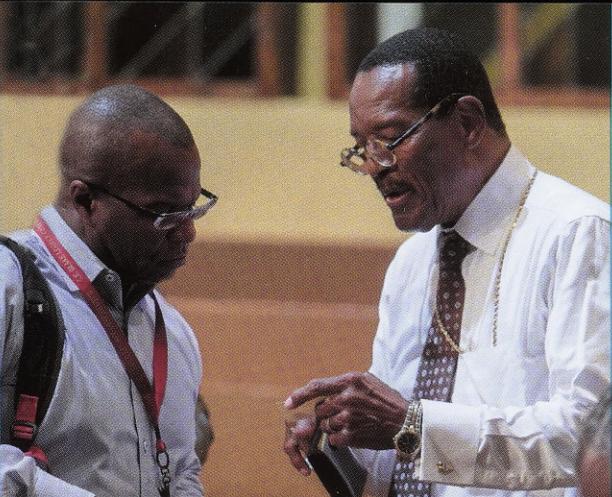
Elder Charles Blake, Jr. also blessed the audience, stating that he would never be the man he is without Bishop Blake's hand in and over his life. "What a joy and privilege it is to serve with my father as his assistant pastor."

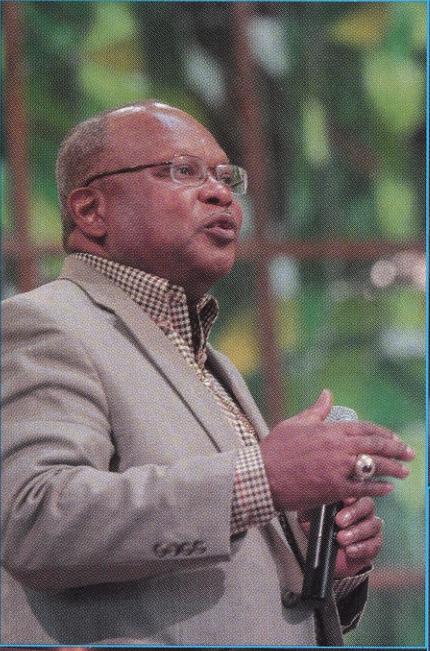
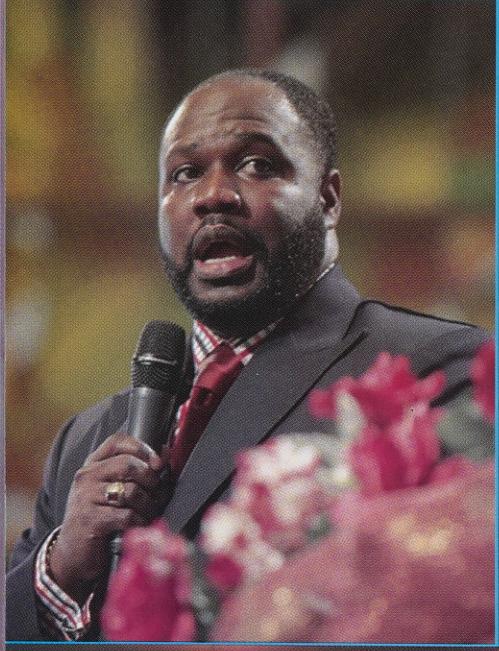
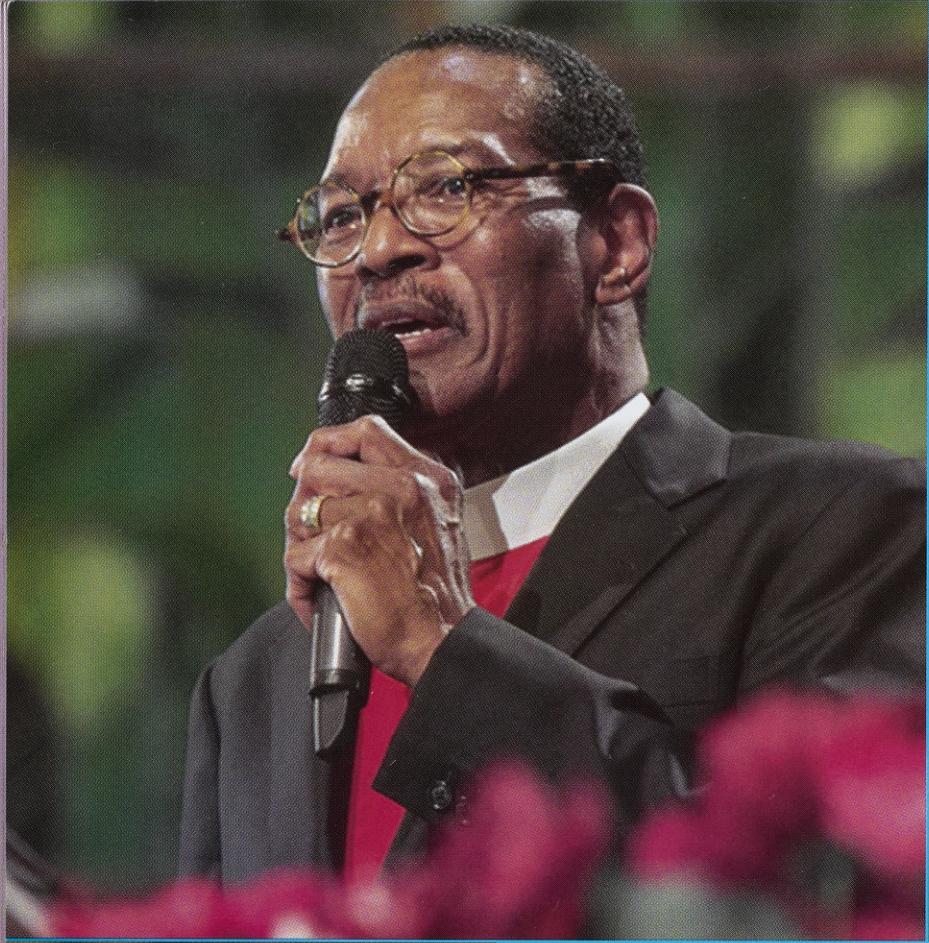
I believe the legacy of Bishop Charles Blake, Sr. is, and will always be, an example as to how the minister should function. Often, I've watched my father stay up all night because he wants to be the best he can be for God's people. I have learned respect for others and myself through my father's example. Most of all, I have learned respect for God, living under the respect that my father has for God.

In a world where there are so many false teachers, preachers, prophets, and pastors, Bishop Blake's true legacy is demonstrating that there are yet genuine and trustworthy ministers. **TWT**

Elder Lawrence Blake, Sr. is the Young Adult pastor of West Angeles COGIC and Adjutant Apostolic to the Presiding Bishop.







THE Bishop C. E. Blake  
LEGACY CONFERENCE



AN **ELIJAH AND ELISHA**  
EXPERIENCE

**LEGACY DVD'S AVAILABLE NOW**

ORDER AT [WWW.CHARLESEBLAKE.COM](http://WWW.CHARLESEBLAKE.COM)

SESSION 1- OPENING SESSION: LADY MAE L BLAKE - "THE JOURNEY"  
SESSION 2- BISHOP C.E. BLAKE - "IN THE BEGINNING"

SESSION 3- BISHOP C.E. BLAKE - "CHURCH GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT"

SESSION 4- BISHOP C.E. BLAKE - "STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE" PART I

SESSION 5- BISHOP C.E. BLAKE - "STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE" PART II

SESSION 6- BISHOP C.E. BLAKE - "CHURCH MGMT. & ADMINISTRATION"

SESSION 7- BISHOP C.E. BLAKE - "ANointing & COMMUNION SERVICE" BONUS DVD

COMMEMORATIVE LEGACY CONFERENCE BOOKLET - "ELIJAH AND ELISHA"

ENTIRE LEGACY CONFERENCE SET- PRESIDING BISHOP CHARLES E. BLAKE

INDIVIDUAL DVD'S  
COMMEMORATIVE BOOK  
ENTIRE SET

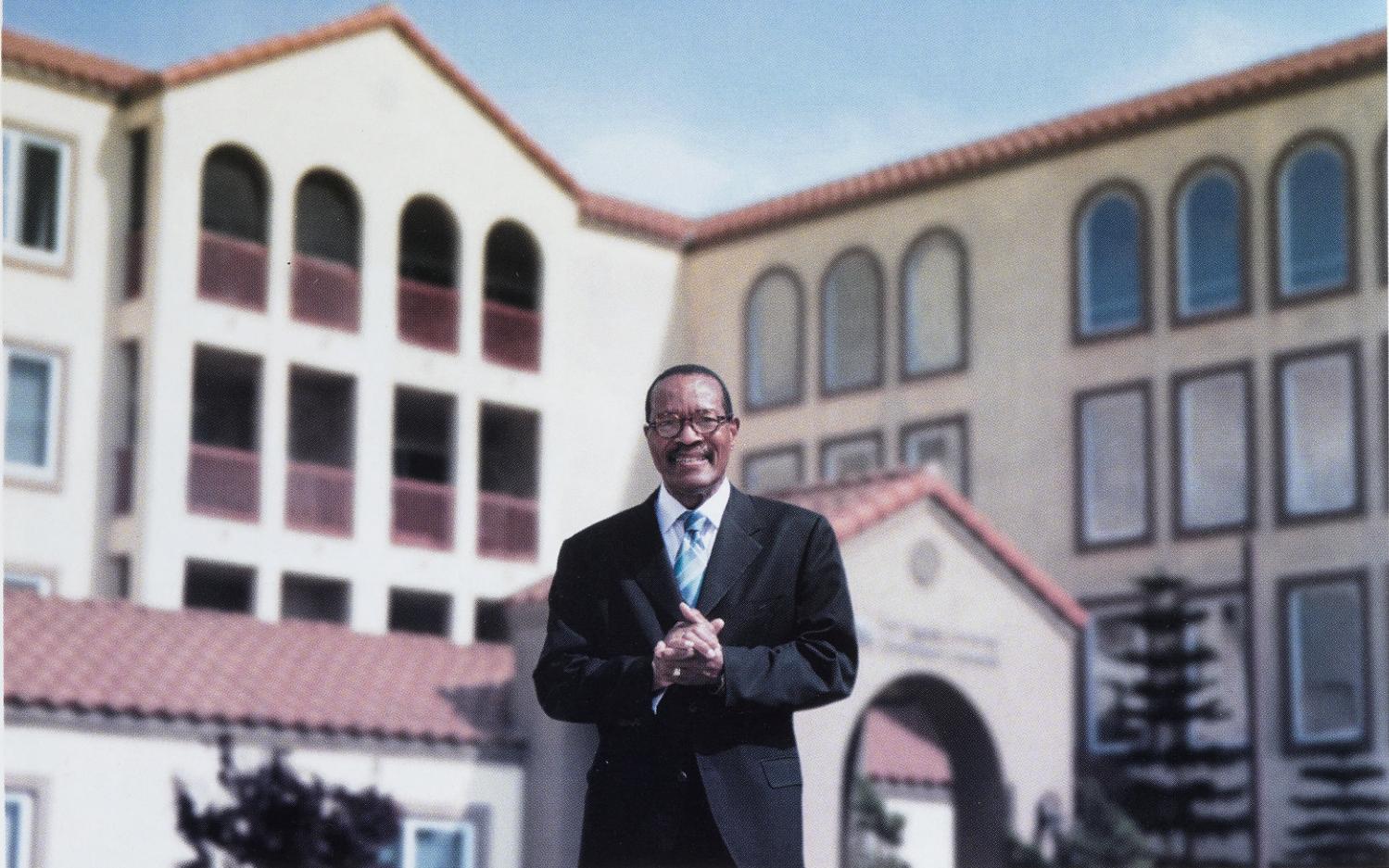
**ORDER  
TODAY**



“Through collaboration and partnerships, we’re able to transform lives and the community at large.”

WELLS  
FARGO

*Bishop Charles Blake  
Founder, West Angeles Community Development Corporation*



A home, a good job, a better tomorrow — every day, people come to the West Angeles Community Development Corporation (WACDC) for help in making things better for themselves and others around them. With support and resources from Wells Fargo, the WACDC can offer programs like homebuyer education and workforce development so people gain the courage to overcome crisis and change their lives.

The WACDC reaches more than 6,000 people a year, but that number cannot measure the transformation of the lives they impact. With new hope and the right tools, the people they help can take a new leap forward — reflecting the power and promise of working together.

Wells Fargo believes these small measures add up to strengthen local neighborhoods and prove little by little, we can all do a lot. **Small is Huge®**.

Together we'll go far

[wellsfargo.com/smallishuge](http://wellsfargo.com/smallishuge)

© 2016 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. IHA-2498801

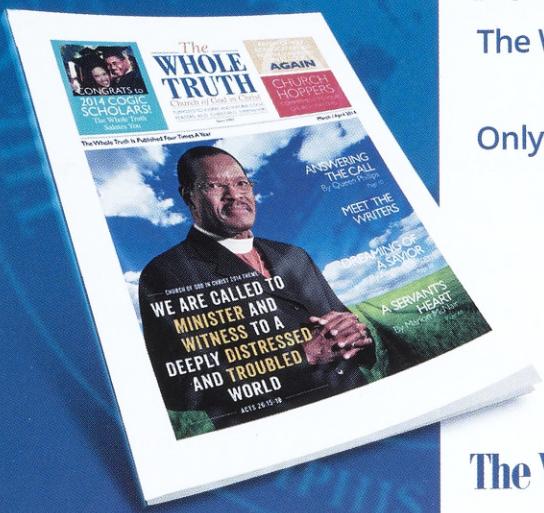


# The WHOLE TRUTH MONTH

## Get 5 FREE Subscriptions . . .

### Read More to Find Out How

JULY is TWT MONTH  
and  
*Sunday, July 17, 2016*  
is  
**The Whole Truth  
(TWT)  
Subscribe Day**



Church of God in Christ Congregations Around the World Will Subscribe To The Whole Truth Magazine (Print and Digital)

TWT INFORMS, INSPIRES, UPLIFTS and ENCOURAGES!

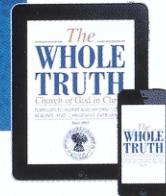
Every Pastor that purchases 10 annual subscriptions will receive five one year digital subscriptions **FREE!**  
That's 15 subscriptions for the price of TEN!

**DON'T MISS THIS QUARTERLY MAGAZINE!**

The Whole Truth (TWT) is the Church of God in Christ's PREMIER MAGAZINE

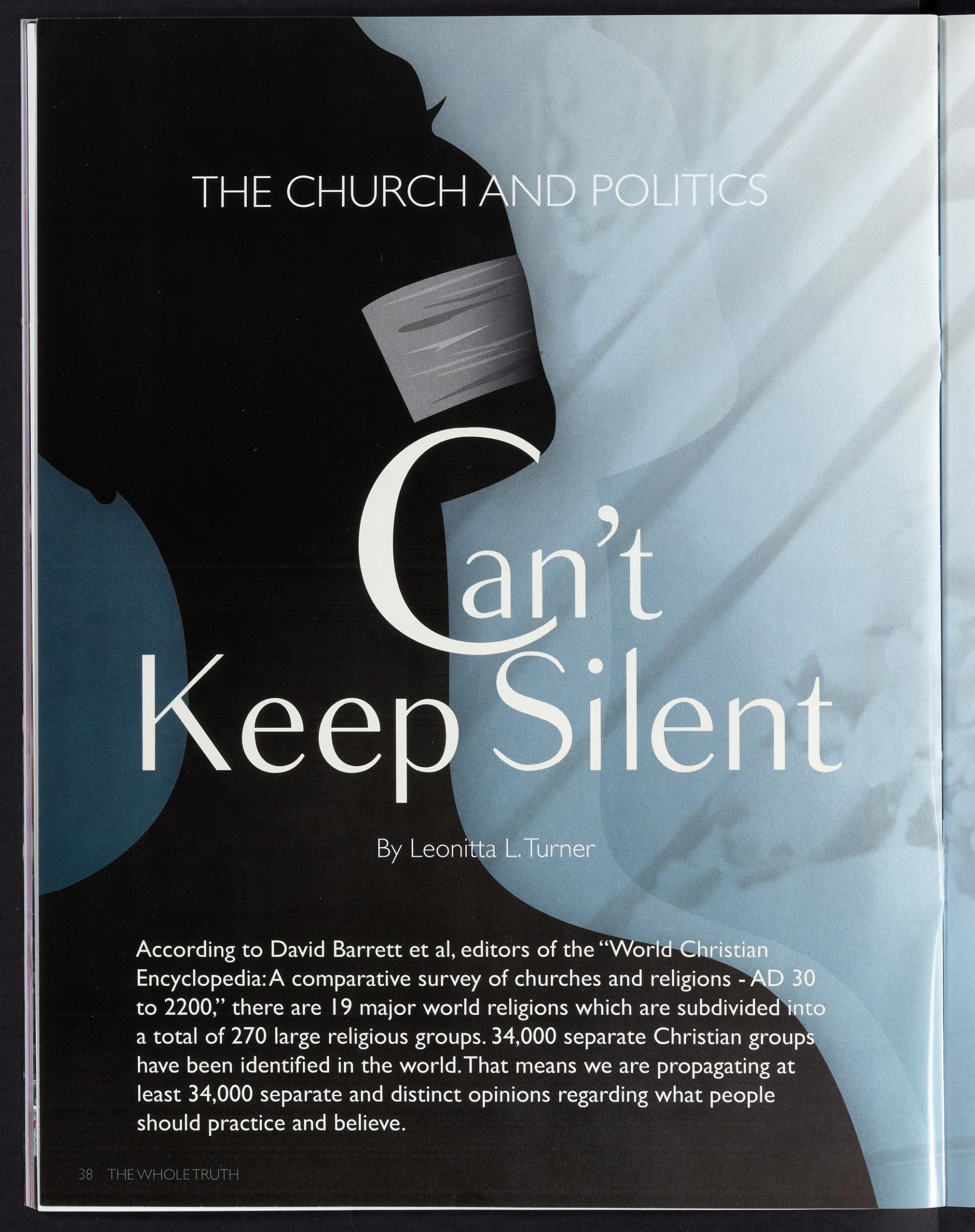
Only \$19.95 for a One Year Print & Digital Subscription

Call (877) 746-8578  
Or go to:  
[www.cogic.org](http://www.cogic.org)  
[www.cogicpublishinghouse.net](http://www.cogicpublishinghouse.net)



**SUBSCRIBE TODAY!**

The Whole Truth "Good News for God's People"



THE CHURCH AND POLITICS

# Can't Keep Silent

By Leonitta L. Turner

According to David Barrett et al, editors of the "World Christian Encyclopedia: A comparative survey of churches and religions - AD 30 to 2200," there are 19 major world religions which are subdivided into a total of 270 large religious groups. 34,000 separate Christian groups have been identified in the world. That means we are propagating at least 34,000 separate and distinct opinions regarding what people should practice and believe.

**C**alling for a separation of church and state is easy; however in reality, politics are often redefined during times of disaster. If there is an unmet humanitarian need or a disaster, the church is among the first to be called on by the government for assistance. While many decry the churches involvement in social policy and national politics, they seek her assistance and support when disaster strikes.

During such times, exceptions are made for churches and religious based organizations, regardless of their tenants. Agreements, such as the one renewed between the Federal Emergency Management Agency and a large disaster relief organization in April 2016, belies the cry for a separation of church and state.

Many feel because the church is a body of born again believers commissioned to show love to all mankind, that it is acceptable for her disciples to invest time, talent, and treasure, as long as nothing is asked in return. So how does the federal government define church?

Jerome Kurtz, former commissioner of the IRS, presented the following guidelines for agents in determining if an organization is a church or not: "Since beliefs and practices are so varied, the IRS cannot define a church, but resorts to a case-by-case approach to determine whether an organization is a church."

One of the criteria used by the IRS to determine if an organization is a church is whether or not there is a formal code of doctrine and discipline. In order to protect the doctrine and disciplines held

by those of the religious community, the church has to stand up for her beliefs. Being passive has resulted in many politicians and the world ignoring the religious community to the point of our voices being relegated to that of disenfranchised citizens.

**Very few people would see their home on fire and make no effort to mitigate the damage the fire could cause. Yet on June 25, 1962, public school children lost the right to pray and for the most part, the church was silent. In 1973, a little more than a decade later, Rhode vs. Wade redefined when life begins and ends and for the most part, the church was silent. Modern day politics have resulted in mandating the church to provide services to those who target their beliefs, religious symbols being removed from public buildings, and the legalization of same sex marriage. The church cannot keep silent.**

Remember the Apostle Paul? Spokesperson and lobbyist for the early church, he embraced every opportunity to expose, expand, and express what was happening in the political arena. As Saul, he influenced the law, whereby he could legally kill Christians. As Paul, he demanded and received an audience with the political leaders to lobby on his own behalf.

**W**hen only a fraction of the church speaks up, the laws of the land do not translate to our political will. As an organization with a definite and distinct ecclesiastical government (another IRS determination of the church), the church needs to make her voice heard instead.

Federal law, however, prohibits most tax-exempt bodies, including houses of worship, from intervening in elections by endorsing or opposing candidates for public office. To survive she must take action! The church needs to speak out and speak up. However, she must continue to do so in love so she does not alienate those to whom she is connected and those to whom she is called to minister. Having served on the executive team of local government for many years, I am keenly aware of how precarious the balance is between church and politics.

Although the Bible is filled with many political overtones, the church should never become so involved in politics that it cannot fulfill the Great Commission. Involvement in politics should never outweigh sharing the Word of God. Perhaps Colossians 2:8 (AMP) said it best: "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception [pseudo-intellectual babble], according to the tradition [and musings] of mere men, following the [a]elementary principles of this world, rather than following the truth." **TWT**

Leonitta Turner is a member of Fresh Anointing Ministries Worship Center (Summerville, SC).

# PRAY FOR THE PEACE

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you. 7 Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces." 8 For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will now say, "Peace be within you." —Psalms 122: 6-8 NKJV

# OF JERUSALEM

By Marion McNair

A few days ago, the memory of my grandmother, Mimi, and the neighborhood Jewish grocer, Mr. Joe, came to mind. I remembered how every day of her life, Mimi earnestly prayed for the peace of Jerusalem and made sure her family prayed for Jerusalem. Mimi was what we in the church world would call a "prayer warrior." She didn't have a "war room" or a "prayer closet," but she prayed for hours on end. Whenever the Spirit of the Lord fell upon her, or her family, friends or others had a need, she would stop what she was doing, fall on her knees, in any room of the house, whether it was the kitchen, bedroom, bathroom or living room, and pray.

I clearly remember the one day my five brothers, sister and I arrived home from elementary school and saw my grandmother kneeling in front of the Queen-Anne wingback armchair in the living room, praying.

I stopped to listen to what she was saying. Shocked, I heard her say, "Lord, You know there's no food in the house, and I have to feed my children." She opened her eyes, glanced at me and said, "Put a pot of water on the stove and bring it to a boil." It was three o'clock in the afternoon. The water evaporated, so I turned the stove off. A few hours later, my grandmother called out and asked, "Are you boiling the water?" I responded by telling her the water ran out, so I turned the stove off. She told me to turn the fire back on under the pot and when the water got low, to refill the pot again.

I was ten years old but vividly remembered being hungry and afraid we were going to bed without food that night. As I watched my grandmother pray, I could hear her words turn into moans. Then, around eight

o'clock that night, the doorbell rang. It was Mr. Joe, the Jewish grocer. He wanted to know if my grandmother could use the three baskets of food he had left in his car. My siblings and I ran to the car. That night, I used the boiling pot of water, which my grandmother previously asked me to boil, to make spaghetti.

When I am weak in my faith, memories of my grandmother travelling in prayer, and God using Mr. Joe to meet our needs, encourages me to continue to trust God. I am reminded of a Dottie Peoples' song that says, "He's an on time God. Yes, He is. Job said, He may not come when you want Him, but He'll be there right on time. He's an on time God, yes, He is."

It is now 2016. Many years have passed since my grandmother, Mimi, transitioned to be with the Lord. However, her legacy continues through me in praying for the peace of Jerusalem.



God loves Jerusalem and in Psalms 122: 6-8, the Bible clearly commissions Christians to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and we will be blessed. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you. Peace be within your walls, Prosperity within your palaces." For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will now say, 'Peace be within you.'" Jerusalem was the place where God's presence dwelled in the temple. It is the city where King David established his throne and where today, in modern Israel, the prime minister lives. It is where the Parliament passes laws and the Supreme Court administers justice.

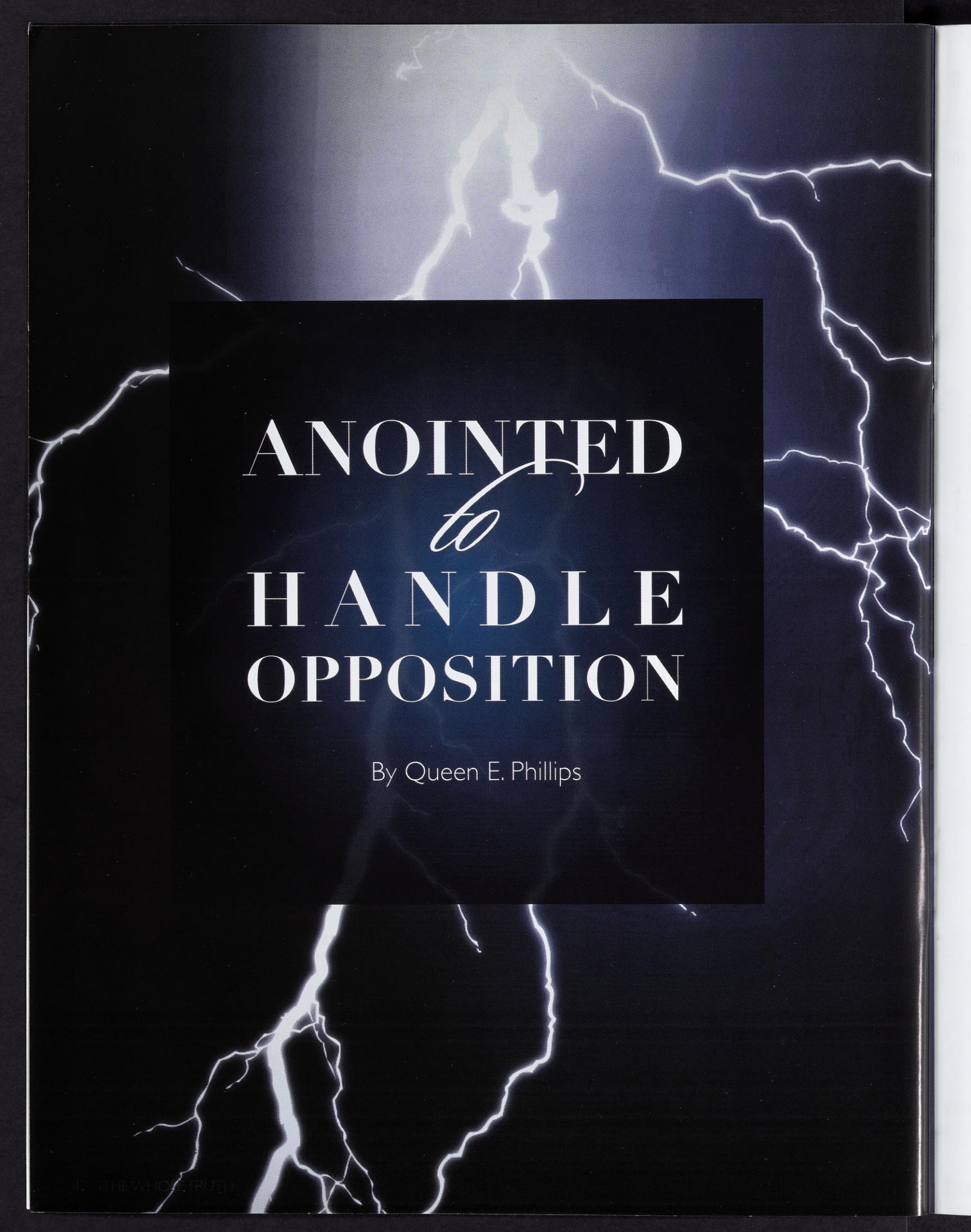
As Christians, we are to pray for Jerusalem, much like Jesus did in Luke 19:41, when Jesus wept over the city. 1 Timothy 2: 1-2 says, "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made

for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence." We pray for the peace of Jerusalem, that God will protect it from the ill-will of ISIS and others who wish to cause it harm. We pray for the return of the Lord, Jesus Christ, for it is only through Him that peace will truly come to that nation and the world because Jesus is the Prince of Peace. The Bible tells us in Romans 11:26, "And in this way all Israel will be saved." When He, Jesus Christ, appears again, every eye will see Him, every knee will bow, and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is the Lord of Lords.

Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for sending Your son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins. We pray for Jerusalem, that doors will be opened for the gospel of Jesus Christ to be freely preached throughout the nation. Lord, as the

people seek their Messiah, we pray that their hearts and minds will be enlightened to understand that the Messiah they are seeking, the Prince of Peace, has already arrived, and true peace will only be established through Him, Jesus Christ, our Lord. We pray that You will protect the nation of Israel from those who wish to harm her. We pray for Your wisdom and guidance for Israel's prime minister, that he will follow peace with all men. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Amen. **TWT**

Marion McNair is an Evangelist-Missionary at West Angeles COGIC (Los Angeles, CA) where she sings in the Mass Choir. She also teaches Biblical Studies at the Lynwood Women's Correctional Facilities.



# ANOINTED *to* HANDLE OPPOSITION

By Queen E. Phillips

# *Good*

stewards of the manifold grace of God, and messengers of the Good News of the Kingdom of God must not be alarmed by opposition - diabolic assignments intended to hinder ministry, discredit good reputations, and pervert the proclamation of truth.

Opposition in the Kingdom of God is inevitable. It may come imperceptibly at the onset, but intensifies with flaming spears of ridicule, lies, rumors, slander, and specifically, false accusations. Facing false accusation can be considered as a mild form of persecution that is becoming prevalent among the Church of Jesus Christ. Although it is non violent in nature, it is emotionally painful, and negatively impacts everyone associated with the accused.

No doubt, many become overwhelmed and contemplate giving up God's ministry assignment. "But, if God be for you who can be against you?" Therefore, false accusations can work for the good as a part of God's plan to: 1) increase our level of trust

"Now after five days Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator named Tertullus... And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation..."  
*(Acts 24:1-2).*

and dependency on Him; and 2) promote us to our next assignment for Him. In essence, God will allow the false accusations to fulfill His purpose in our life and give Him glory in the process (Acts 21:1-14). Our level of commitment to doing God's will, the depth

of our courage, and the truthfulness of our character are revealed through our endurance in the face of opposition. The ability to handle opposition comes through the supernatural power of God and the sufficiency of His grace. In essence, God anoints His chosen to handle the opposition!

Opposition in the form false accusations can come from gifted accusers among our own people, church folks, brothers and sisters in Christ, and even co-laborers in the gospel ministry. At some point, these gifted accusers have been deceived into thinking they are justified in their behavior. Unfortunately, they open themselves up to demonic influence by being driven by a spirit of vengeance. False accusa-

tions are usually assailed when men and women of God speak out against religious traditions, political systems, social injustice, sinful lifestyles, and inappropriate behavior of leaders and lay members in the Church of Jesus Christ. Moreover, opposition in any form is evidence that the kingdom of darkness is threatened by the Kingdom of Light.

Flinging false accusations are the tactics used to discourage godly leadership and discredit honorable reputations. When hidden agendas are exposed, wrong motives are confronted, and religious systems are threatened, accusers will recruit others that will agree with their accusations to cause division in the body of Christ. For example, Apostle Paul's own people turned against him and literally tried to murder him.

In chapter 22 of Acts, Paul stood boldly to defend himself. His defense was based on his integrity and right standing with God. He gave an accurate and transparent account of his actions and testimony of his Damascus Road conversion. He knew his assignment and had no hidden motives; he was totally submitted to doing the will of God. Paul's assignment was to the Gentiles and this alone caused condemnation by his fellowman. The hatred and hostility of his own people resulted in a contracted conspiracy to have him murdered. He suffered at

*When*  
hidden agendas  
are exposed,  
wrong motives  
are confronted,  
and  
religious  
systems  
are  
threatened ...

the hands of a mob he had once been privy to. Yet, God had a plan and purpose. Rest assured, God's plan will always come to pass (Acts 23:11). Paul had to go to Rome to bear witness; therefore, he could not be killed by the Jews in Jerusalem. God intervened and made a way of escape (Acts 23:23-24). After their false accusations and their oath to kill Paul failed at Jerusalem, they had to take the case before Felix at Caesarea. Intent on succeeding with their false accusations, they prepared themselves to be politically correct and to present a more professional false accusation. They brought along Tertullus, an articulate orator. He was skilled in oral presentation—a

“gifted” accuser. No matter how articulate or intellectual our accusers are, they are injudicious to believe that God will allow His name to be discredited by false accusations against His chosen and anointed vessels. This is why as ministers we must:

- Be accountable.
- Walk in obedience to God's Word.
- Lead by example.
- Be men and women of integrity. Our integrity and our right standing with God are crucial to our victorious outcome.

*No*  
matter  
how well  
prepared  
and gifted  
your  
accusers  
appear,  
TRUTH is  
eternal,  
and  
what God  
has promised  
*will*  
come  
to pass.

Paul's false accusation saga continued for two years (Acts 24:27). He defended himself before Festus and again before King Agrippa. His testimony did not change; he held to the truth. When we stand before our accusers, we cannot be intimidated nor should we be ashamed of the truth or of whom it is we represent. We must stand in truth and trust God (Acts 25:7-8).

## *Finally,*

Paul arrived at Rome as God had predestined. The case presented against Paul by the gifted accuser failed. It was part of his journey to fulfill God's purpose for his life. Even those false accusations were steps that led Paul to his next assignment to finish the good work God had begun in him (Acts 28:16-31).

Moreover, accusations against Jesus throughout His earthly ministry, by His own people who sought to have Him crucified, worked for our good—the Plan of Salvation.

As good stewards of the manifold grace of God, and messengers of the Good News of the Kingdom of God, we must not be alarmed by false accusations in today's culture. If you are chosen by God, you are anointed to handle the opposition, even from articulate orators (gifted accusers). No matter how well prepared and gifted your accusers appear, TRUTH is eternal, and what God has promised will come to pass. You can depend on an intentional God to get you to your destination, to continue the work of ministry He has assigned you for His glory.

**TWT**

Queen E. Phillips is a published author, licensed evangelist missionary, leadership staff member and faithful servant at Mt. Rose Church City of Refuge under the leadership of Dr. Ron Eagleton, Senior Pastor. Email: queenephillips@gmail.com. Connect with Queen on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.



OFFICIAL CANDIDATE FOR GENERAL BOARD

# BISHOP PRINCE E.W. BRYANT, SR.

*Texas South Central Jurisdiction - Church of God in Christ, Inc.*

*Pastor, The Island of Hope Church of God in Christ*



## General Board Candidacy Platform Election 2016

### I. Reaffirming Holiness and Sanctification

- Holiness must be the underlying and guiding principle that governs our organizational policies, operations and relationships
- The foundational doctrine of Pentecostalism, Holiness and Sanctification must be reaffirmed

### II. Promoting Organizational Efficiency & Fiscal Accountability

- Unity in the Executive Branch
- Unify with the Presiding Bishop's vision and encourage support at all levels to promote the leaders program.
- Continuity of Vision [20 year plan]
- Organize National Disaster/Crisis First Responders
- Consolidation of National Calendar
- Program from National Departments for Jurisdictional and Local Departmental Ministry
- Standard Protocol for Jurisdictional Operation
- National Registration at the jurisdictional level

### III. Supporting The Local Church

- Church Extension
- To enhance existing and emerging churches by securing resources and assistance to further ministries through internal and external partnerships with local, state and national entities.
- Church Planting  
[10,000 New Churches World Wide]
- Develop a clear vision to plant churches through evangelistic efforts in the national church by establishing funds for land acquisitions with the goal of a COGIC church in every city and community
- Each district plant one church
- Each church plant one church

### IV. Pastoral Care

- Advocate insurance and long term disability programs for pastors and their spouses
- Advocate retirement program and succession planning for pastors
- Create more defined structured practical training and develop a curriculum in a continuing education program for pastors and elders

### Texas South Central Jurisdiction

- 100+ Church Diocese
- Monthly Ministry Meeting
- Church Extension Program
- Local Church Legal Code Compliance
  - 1) Articles of Incorporation
  - 2) 501(c)3
  - 3) Insurance
- 19 Districts
- Standardized Protocol for District Operation
- District Parity
- Denominational Ordination Process
- New Pastor's Orientation Classes
- C.H. Nelson Urban Ministry Institute
- N.H. Henderson Scholarship Program

The Whole Truth  
PRESENTS  
**Global 82**

# COGIC IN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

By Reginald Boswell

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

## **COGIC EXPANSION AROUND THE WORLD**

COGIC's Global 82 (G82) is The Whole Truth magazine's way to highlight information from around the globe. The Church of God in Christ (COGIC) has a significant impact on many different cultures from around the world; greatly affecting followers of Christ in 82 countries (up from 63 in 2014). The newly added countries on the continent of Africa include: Lesotho, Guinea, Southern Africa; Namibia, Southwestern Africa and Gambia. Countries on the continent of Asia include: Bhutan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Singapore. Countries added in the West Hemisphere include: Nicaragua in Central America, Ecuador in South America and Israel in the Middle East.

## **CULTURE IN JAPAN**

The Japanese culture has a rich history that dates back to prehistoric times, with evidence of culture older than that of Greece and Rome. Japan, pronounced Nippon by the Japanese and translated "Sun's Origin," is popularly called the "Land of the Rising Sun." Underwater ruins of civilizations near Okinawa prove that this area became inhabited in prehistoric times. There is a prevailing belief that Japan's underwater pyramid and megaliths connect with that of the Ancient Civilization of Mu. Japanese script resembles Hebrew characters representing concrete objects, instead of concepts like Mandarin Chinese. The national religion of Japan is Shintoism whose beliefs help develop the attitudes of the people. Even though many Japanese do not claim to follow Shintoism, the thought processes belonging to this "way of life," along with Buddhism, had a strong impact on the development of attitudes in Japanese culture.

## **COGIC Japan History**

Bishop Archie Buchanan began this work in Japan under then Senior Bishop O.T. Jones in 1967. According to the current jurisdictional prelate of Japan, Bishop Carl Hodges, "Bishop Buchanan sowed his life into this work, and he did it with joy, with perseverance, with endurance. He did it with all the qualities of a soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ. Bishop Buchanan was a teacher from his heart. He established two Bible schools in Okinawa, Japan. The Bishop had correspondence students in the U.S. and was a man full of wisdom, lauded for his excellent understanding of the Word of God and depth of knowledge concerning the scriptures. He left a great legacy of teaching in Japan. He protected the name and reputation of the church and held the Church Of God in high regard, and emphatically stood for the Church of God in Christ." Bishop Buchanan transitioned to Glory in December 2004.

## **COGIC Japan Leadership**

In November 2004, Bishop Carl Hodges was designated as the prelate of Japan, accepting the leadership mantle to continue the legacy of service and teaching in the Japan jurisdiction laid by Bishop Buchanan. A resident of Japan for the past 25 years, Elder Hodges was installed as pastor of the Greater Friendly Temple in Okinawa, Japan in 1992 by Bishop Buchanan. Bishop Hodges continues to provide sound doctrine and well founded spiritual guidance in an environment where the blessings of God flow into the lives of those seeking the move of God for themselves and their families. Bishop Hodges is a firm believer in prayer and encourages ministers, missionaries, evangelists, elders, pastors, superintendents and bishops to visit Japan. He stated, "Your life and ministry will never be the same."

## **Tsunami Hits Japan**

"When you give to the National Church you are giving around the world." Bishop Carl Hodges said. On March 11, 2011, an earthquake triggered a tsunami in the island nation of Japan, causing one of the worst natural catastrophes in recorded history. Some tremors were reported in Okinawa, the region where COGIC's Japan Jurisdiction churches are located, yet were not affected. Nevertheless, Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake visited Japan on July 28, 2011 to presented a check and to donate rice cookers to assist those victims keeping with the mission of COGIC Charities, responding to the need of casualties around the world. The presence of the Church of God in Christ is certainly welcoming and eases some of the burdens when assistance is required during sudden calamities on foreign soil. **TWT**

Reginald Boswell is a member of True Light COGIC in Huntsville, AL, where Supt. Dr. Terrell Harris, Jr. is the pastor and Bishop Oscar L. Meadows is the prelate of Alabama 1st Jurisdiction.



JAPAN

COGIC Elder/Journalist Tackles

# Race, Faith and Politics Today

By The Whole Truth Staff

Police shootings, Donald Trump and salvation through Jesus Christ alone – these are what the nation is talking about now, but without a biblical viewpoint. Enter Kyle Huckins, a Caucasian elder in the Church of God in Christ.



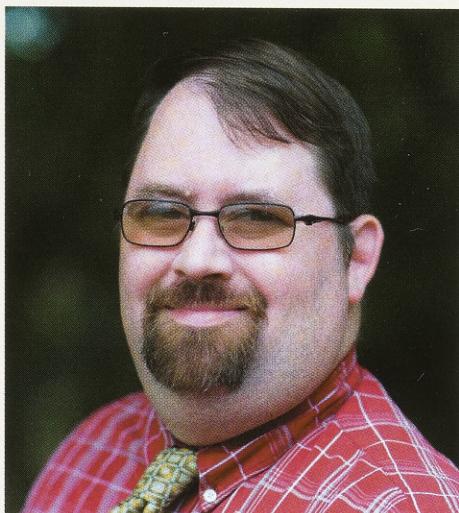
## "We're selecting a president through shouts and sound bites and seeing people write off Christianity."

"Everybody's remarking about this protest and that riot, but no one seems to be dealing with the core issues dividing our country, such as inequality in the justice system, the disturbing resurgence of racism in our neighborhoods and media, and targeting of black believers for hatred and discrimination," Huckins explains. "We're selecting a president through shouts and sound bites and seeing people write off Christianity. However, Scripture gives wisdom to guide us, research gives facts to inform us, and interviewing gives understanding to unite us."

Huckins, who has an earned doctorate in journalism and significant graduate study in theology, brings these factors together in his new book, "Race, Faith and Politics Today," a collection of more than 125 of his nationally honored newspaper columns. The volume is an update of his first work, with the present edition featuring important new material, written with African-American Christians specifically in mind, and race relations and 2016 election in sharp view.

"With color, many in the news business stay away from going beyond the headlines out of fear," he says, speaking as a veteran of more than a quarter-century in professional media. "However, I feel race is much too important to avoid. The lack of dialogue among whites, blacks and other racial groups needs to be replaced by a robust discussion. That's messy but the only way to bring right thinking and agreement."

Among the 10 chapters in "Race, Faith and Politics Today" are 'Holy Spirit, Come,' 'The Slippery Slope of Social Issues,' 'Politics & Position' (with several columns discussing Trump, Clinton and other 2016 candidates) 'Black Is Beautiful' and 'COGIC Coast to Coast,' the last a compilation of Huckins' "Church



"Spotlight" features in The Whole Truth magazine.

"Every time I spotlight a congregation, I'm amazed at what our people can do in ministering to both their church's members and community," he relates. "This truly is the Grand Old Church Of God In Christ."

Discussion of born-again beliefs and theological questions, plus profiles of beloved saints like Carlis Moody, Sr. and Russell Wilson take significant space in the book. All this consideration reflects a COGIC point of view, which Huckins has gained by serving as associate minister, director of education and Sunday School superintendent of local congregations, district media-relations director, and dean of a jurisdictional ordination and licensure institute.

Huckins' "Race, Faith and Politics Today" is available for \$11.99 in print through [www.racefaithandpoliticstoday.com](http://www.racefaithandpoliticstoday.com), Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and other major web portals. With the purchase of six print books from [www.racefaithandpoliticstoday.com](http://www.racefaithandpoliticstoday.com), buyers receive, for FREE, a Bible study curriculum to supplement the book, and a seventh copy of the volume. The eBook is available for \$9.99.

"You can not only get in-

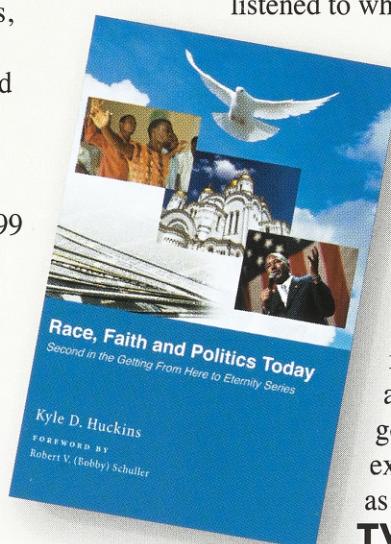
formed about what's happening in current events with the book, the columns on theology teach about salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost," Huckins says. "I'm praying for praise reports about folks getting touched by God with this work."

Huckins has won 17 major awards for his media efforts. These include his column's honors for "best faith reporting" from Religion News-writers Association (RNA), the world's largest group of journalists covering spirituality, and "best standing column" honors from Evangelical Press Association, the nation's biggest organization of Christian news outlets. "This writer does have a distinctive force that sets him apart in his decisive views and stands on key issues," wrote EPA contest judges. "His writing is critical, as in an editorial view, but it also is informative, as in a feature article that teaches."

The author insists his favorite award of all time is for "best coverage of issues of concern to minorities," given by the Indiana Society of Professional Journalists for his columns. "African-Americans, for example, have been an incredible blessing in my life. They have taught me much and have

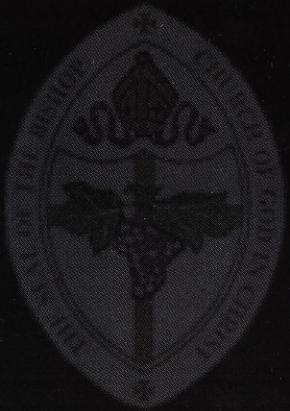
listened to what I've had to say," he states. "I thusly want to write on these topics with as much godly excellence as possible."

**TWT**



# Bishop

LaDell Thomas, Jr.



Your Candidate From The Heart of Texas to  
**THE GENERAL BOARD**  
of the Church of God In Christ 2016

*"Committed To The Past, A Bridge To The Future"*

The Heart of a Servant for the  
GENERAL BOARD 2016

*Bishop*  
LaDell Thomas, Jr.

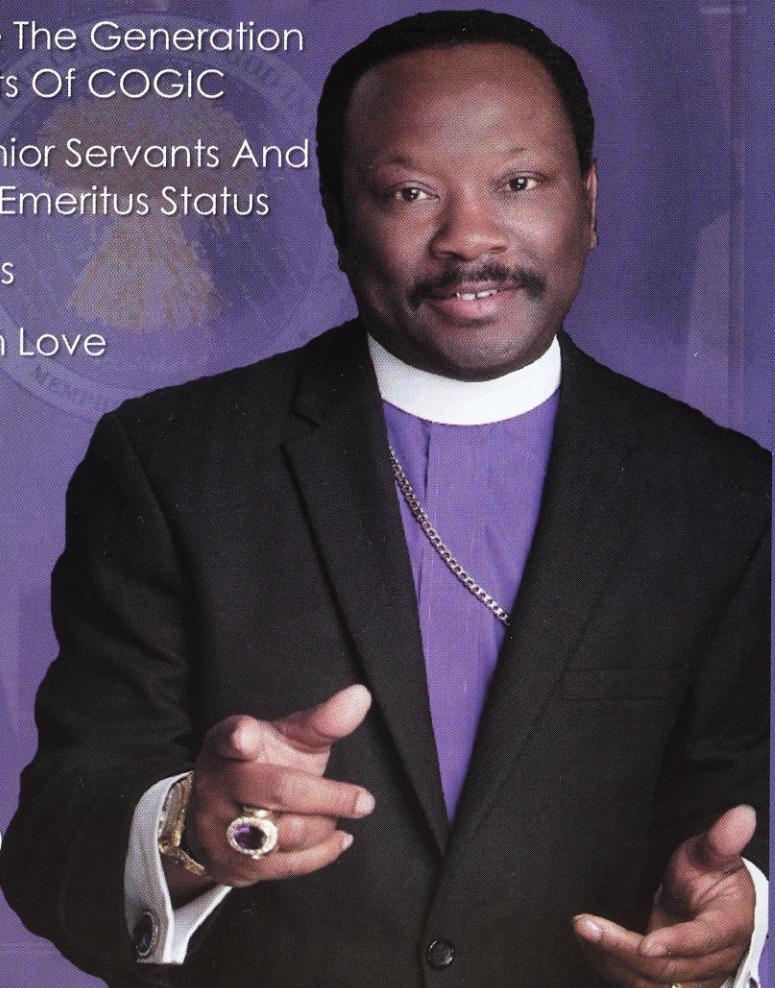
*"Committed To The Past, A Bridge To The Future"*

What  
Does He  
STAND for?

- **A Voice** That Works To Bridge The Generation Gap While Upholding The Tenets Of COGIC
- **A Voice** To Advocate For Senior Servants And Give Honor With Benefits To An Emeritus Status
- **A Voice** To Represent Fairness
- **A Voice** To Speak The Truth In Love

Your Candidate From The Heart of Texas to  
**THE GENERAL BOARD**

of the Church of God In Christ 2016



# ARC: ASSESSMENTS | RECORDS | CREDENTIALING

The Official Online Portal for the Office of the General Secretary

*“CREATED with YOU IN MIND”*

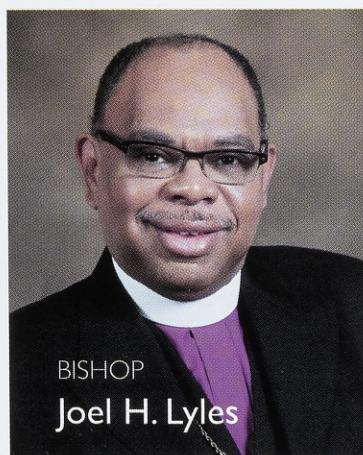
By Angela Clinton



AS renowned author and pastor Ed Stetzer once said, “There are some wonderful benefits of technology that enable the mission of the church.” With the idea of enabling and furthering the mission of the church, Bishop Joel H. Lyles has fully recognized and embraced the need for the church to leverage the use of technology, especially as it pertains to its operational procedures. As the general secretary of the Church of God in Christ, Bishop Lyles has been laser-focused on ensuring the Office of the General Secretary operates as effectively and efficiently as possible, by employing the use of cutting-edge technology. One of Bishop Lyles’ main goals as general secretary has been to bring the office “into the 21st century,” by replacing antiquated methods with modern ways to accomplish the same tasks in a much more proficient manner.

**With this goal in mind, ARC was created.**

ARC is the official online portal for the Office of the General Secretary. Developed by a highly-skilled team, led by Superintendent Antwan Powels, of software programmers, website designers, and system analysts using the latest technology and industry best practices, ARC has empowered Bishop Lyles and his staff to streamline operational procedures for optimal use of time and resources for the Church of God in Christ.



BISHOP  
Joel H. Lyles

ARC, which stands for Assessments, Records and Credentialing, is being utilized to optimize the processes and procedures for the General Secretary’s Office, jurisdictional secretaries, and credential holders alike. At the same time, it provides a safe and secure resource center for all constituents of the Church of God in Christ.

Let's take a moment to discover the great, new features and benefits that ARC has made available to the Church of God in Christ:

### FOR JURISDICTIONAL SECRETARIES -

- Keep up-to-date records of jurisdictional churches
- Maintain historical member information
- Order credentials for new appointments
- Manage master roster for General Assembly
- Check the status of background checks for credential holders
- Check the status of sexual misconduct for credential holders

### FOR CREDENTIAL HOLDERS -

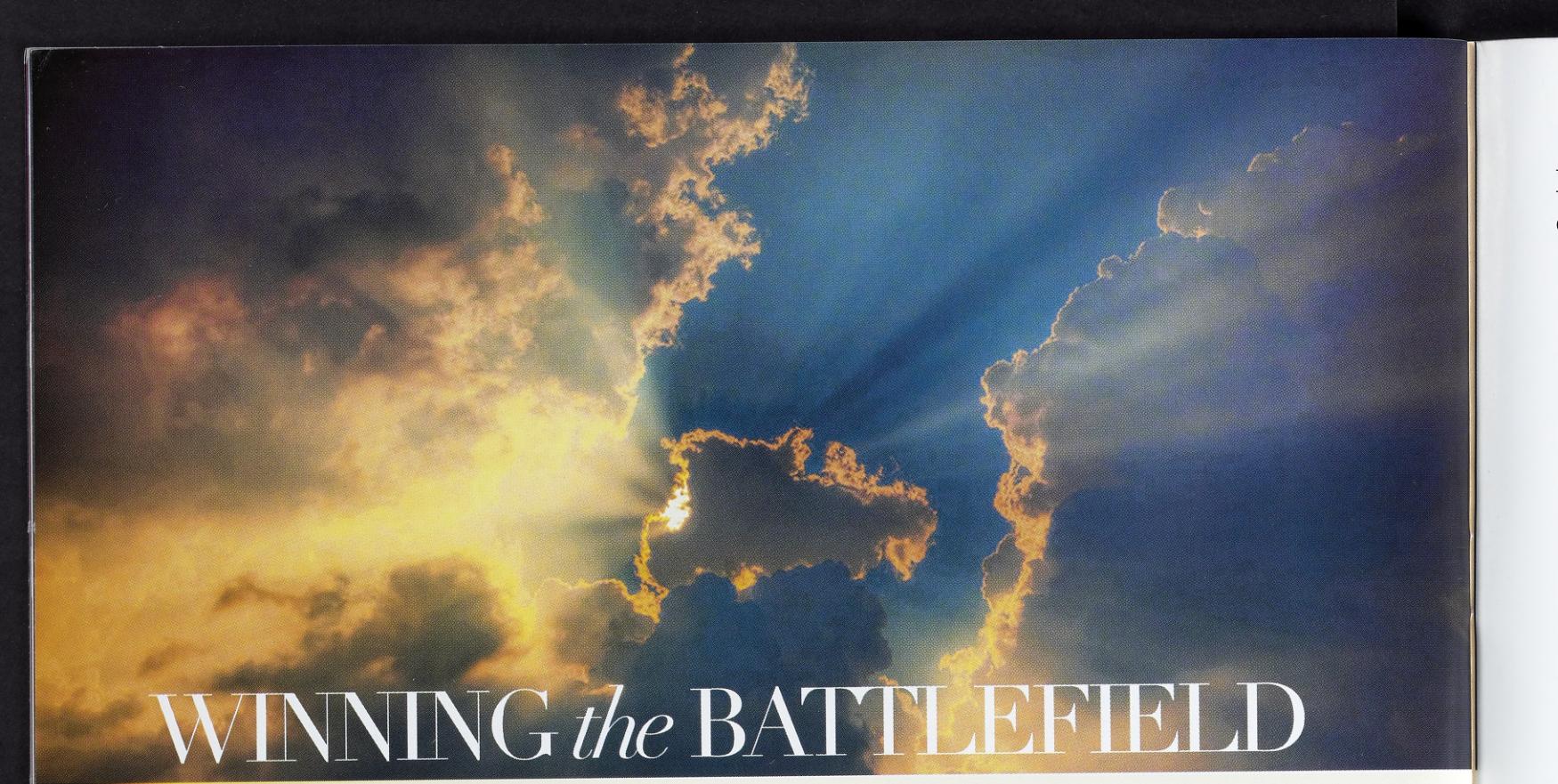
- Download digital certificates of election
- Access to General Assembly information
- Complete mandatory background check
- Complete mandatory sexual misconduct training

### FOR ALL COGIC CONSTITUENTS -

- Exclusive deals available with partners such as LifeLock®, AARP, Dell™ and Office Depot®
- Access to online training approved by the Church of God in Christ
- Browse your digital copy of The Whole Truth
- Manage your subscription of The Whole Truth
- Check that your contact information is up-to-date with the Church of God in Christ

ARC can be accessed and used by any member in good-standing with the Church of God in Christ. Setting up an account is free and easy! We encourage you to create one today at <http://www.cogicgen-sec.com/> to begin taking advantage of the features and benefits now available. **TWT**

Angela Clinton is the Online Content Manager for the Church of God in Christ.



# WINNING *the* BATTLEFIELD CALLED *the* MIND

By Elder Rick D. Cunningham

Read the book of Ecclesiastes. In recounting his experiences and outlook, Solomon alternated between high and low mood swings. By clinical definition, Solomon, the wisest of all men, had a bipolar disorder. He wrote this concerning himself, "Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 2:17). Later in Ecclesiastes, he had a more rational and positive view. "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth" (Ecclesiastes 12:9-10). The alternating outlook that Solomon shifted between had a direct impact on his behavior and his decision making.

A stable outlook and understanding is what

God intends for us. Just as the wisdom given to Solomon was a gift from God, so is a sound mind. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Academia and theology have presented varying views on the cause of mental issues. We can be certain of this much: God gave us a sound mind. Anything contrary to that is not of God. With Christians, there is a spiritual battle being waged to distract us from serving and loving the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. The mind is the final battlefield that Satan is trying to win. Once he has your mind, you will become submissive to his seductions and suggestions and yield yourself to him. Romans 6:16 states, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

It is not unheard of for followers of God to battle with mental illness. A survey by Lifeway Research Biblical Solutions for Life (2014) revealed a level of acute mental illness in the churches surveyed. The quantitative survey of pastors was designed by LifeWay Research. 1,000 telephone surveys were conducted May 7-31, 2014, revealing the following:

- 74% of pastors indicate they personally know one or more people who have been diagnosed with clinical depression;
- 76% of pastors indicate they personally know one or more people who have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder;
- 59% of pastors have counseled one or more people who were eventually diagnosed with an acute mental illness;
- 66% of pastors have read several books on counseling people with acute mental illness, while 7% indicate they have used none of these resources.

Things can occur in our lives that have the potential to drive the strongest of people over the edge. David was a warrior king. He was fearless and he loved God. But David encountered a succession of challenges that nearly broke him. David said, “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Psalm 27:14).



Learning how to deal with mental issues extends beyond yourself. There are many who have family members that suffer some kind of undiagnosed mental disorder. It is important that we are honest about the mental condition of not only ourselves, but of our loved ones who are exhibiting concerning behaviors. In the gospel according to Matthew is the story of a man who sought the help of Jesus because of the behavior of his son. “And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water” (Matthew 17:14-15). A fear of embarrassing the family name was not a concern. The boy needed help and he loved him enough to kneel down before Jesus in a public setting and ask for help.

The Bible promises us this about God: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind

is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:3). Whatever the issues are that are causing stress and questionable behavior, God Himself will intervene if you invite Him in and keep your mind on Him. Mental disorder is not easy to discuss, nevertheless, it exists within the church and we have a responsibility to address it and give assistance to those battling it. The mind is the last battlefield. Maintain control of your mind and you’ll win the battle. **TWT**

Elder Rick Cunningham is the author of “Making Choices in Christ: Moving Beyond Self-Destructive Choices and Behavior.”

#### REFERENCE

Lifeway Biblical Research Solutions. (2014.) Study of Acute Mental Illness and Christian Faith. Retrieved from <http://www.lifewayresearch.com/mentalillnessstudy/>

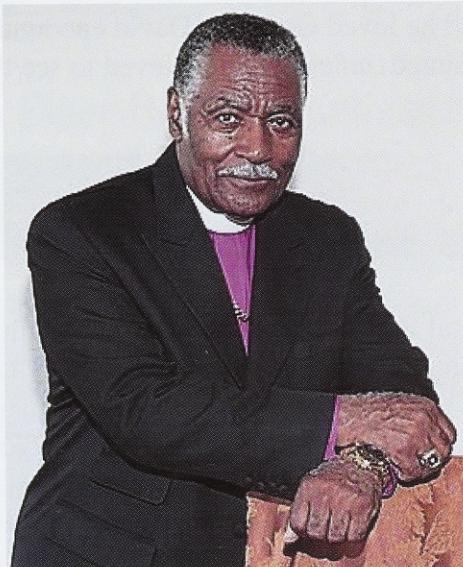
# a hot Date

SATURDAY NIGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL  
with ILLINOIS FIRST

By Sonya D. Bradford

## Every Saturday night,

hundreds of lovers – lovers of Sunday School, that is, hook up by phone fain to feast on the Word of God. For more than five years, the Illinois First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the Church Of God In Christ has been hosting a weekly conference call that unites students from all over the world to indulge in world class instruction of seminary quality. With the blessings of jurisdictional prelate, Bishop Ocie Booker, Elder Michael Payton of New Birth COGIC in Chicago, and Sunday School Superintendent for Illinois First, Saturday Night Sunday School (SNSS) was launched, somewhat by accident. To save time and money, Elder Payton opted to take advantage of technology by communicating with



BISHOP OCIE BOOKER

his State Sunday School staff via conference call, rather than having everyone travel to a central location to meet. After the conference call meetings were underway, the Lord prompted Elder Payton to incorporate the teaching of the weekly Sunday School lesson during the call, instead of just having another “meeting.” And the rest, as it’s so often said, is history.

SNSS whets the palates of students of all walks of life and levels of Bible knowledge by serving as the “appetizer” to the traditional gatherings in our local assemblies on Sunday morning. Every lesson comes directly from COGIC’s Power For Living curriculum, which is based on International Sunday School Lessons, the International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching, and is taught by a guest instructor. Instructors for SNSS are prayerfully chosen using a variety of factors, including: expertise, personality, teaching style and even their testimony. For example, Bishop Roger L. Jones Sr., COGIC’s national director of Hope, Healing and Restoration, was handpicked to teach “A Reversal of Shame” because of his personal testimony of redemption and restoration. This lesson was based on the compassion and forgiveness Jesus bestowed upon the sinful woman with the alabaster box in the 7th Chapter of Luke. Likewise,

licensed psychiatrist, Dr. Jonathan Shepherd, medical director of Hope Health Systems, Inc., was chosen to teach “A Sound Mind” based on his medical expertise and experience in the mental health field. This particular lesson dealt with “Legion,” the demoniac of Luke 8 who was miraculously healed by Jesus. Guest instructors for SNSS vary from college professors to department heads within COGIC’s national church leadership.

On any given Saturday night, **at least 700 students tune in to the live conference call** which is always recorded using a high definition phone system. Subsequently, the conference call is either downloaded in mp3 format or replayed for later listening. When totaling the live callers, downloads and replays, between 1,700 to 1,800 students have accessed each weekly lesson. Embedded within those numbers are students who call in to share with an audience of people on college campuses, military bases and convalescent homes. “In these last days, that’s our goal: to be able to spread the Word of God and the gospel through a free medium. We don’t charge. We don’t ask anyone to send any money in. In almost six years, we have not raised one offering – and don’t plan to. It’s just a free way of being blessed by the Word of God,” Elder Payton declares.

SNSS has come a long way since its inception in January of 2011 and was recently added to the program lineup on Family Gospel Radio. Currently, the replay of the previous week’s lesson of SNSS is being aired every Saturday at 10 pm (CST) via this internet



ELDER MICHAEL PAYTON



MISSIONARY MIRRIAM KNOX



MOTHER SHIRLEY HUGHES

radio app. Thanks to social media and old fashioned word-of-mouth advertising, SNSS continues to gain momentum, but Elder Payton and his staff are yet persevering to extend its reach even further. They have goals to broadcast the weekly call live over the radio, and as daunting as the task may be, also find a way to broadcast the weekly conference call live in correctional institutions across the nation, to accommodate those who need it and are interested in hearing the Word of God.

The influence of Bishop Vincent Matthews, president of COGIC’s International Missions Department, along with the instructors who have a global reach, has made it possible for SNSS to be heard in faraway places, such as Africa, Russia, Brazil and Venezuela, to name a few. As many as 13 countries are playing the lessons in their various missions and churches and the lessons are being used to indoctrinate souls into the Church Of God In Christ teachings. Remarkably, SNSS is heard in all 50 states, but the goal yet remains “to reach as many souls as possible.”

SNSS also shares Presiding Bishop Charles E. Blake’s heart for unity and being “one church” in the Body of Christ. Elder Payton believes that SNSS can be used to fulfill Bishop Blake’s vision of unity by inviting teachers from other reformations to share their gifts as guest instructors. As it stands now, students from the American Methodist Episcopal (AME), Missionary Baptist and Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW) churches join the conference call faithfully because most of them are already using the Standard Lesson Commentary which is tweaked according to

**SATURDAY NIGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Join Thousands Of Students From Around The World!

**Dial (641) 715-3580**

Access Code 528863# 9pm (cst) Every Saturday!

[www.saturdaynightsundayschool.com](http://www.saturdaynightsundayschool.com)

Join Bishop Ocie Booker and Illinois First Sunday School for the 266th Edition of

**SATURDAY NIGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Special Guest Instructor  
**Dr. Jonathan Shepard, MD**  
Medical Director, Hope Health Systems, Inc.

To Join, Dial (641) 715-3580

Access Code 528863# 9pm (CST) Every Saturday Night!

Lesson #7: "A Sound Mind"

April 16th 9pm cst

Join Bishop Ocie Booker and Illinois First Sunday School for the 265th Edition of

**SATURDAY NIGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Special Guest Instructor  
**Bishop Roger L. Jones, Sr.**  
National Director, Hope, Healing and Restoration Ministries, COGIC

To Join, Dial (641) 715-3580

Access Code 528863# 9pm (CST) Every Saturday Night!

Lesson #6: "A Reversal of Slaves"

April 9th 9pm cst

Join Bishop Ocie Booker and Illinois First Sunday School for the 264th Edition of

**SATURDAY NIGHT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Special Guest Instructor  
**Dr. Fay Maureen Butler**  
Brooklyn, New York

To Join, Dial (641) 715-3580

Access Code 528863# 9pm (CST) Every Saturday Night!

Lesson #5: "Renewed Health"

April 2nd 9pm cst

denomination and doctrine. Elder Payton revealed that he's been talking to a few prominent members of other denominations about becoming guest instructors for SNSS and views their inclusion as a plus. He also offers this disclaimer: "We're using the Bible as our Sunday School book, and that makes it where we can cross paths and denomination and just stick to what the Word is." By including instructors from other denominations, Elder Payton is certain that they will bring their circle of influence with them, which will only cause SNSS to "grow and just burst."

Bishop Booker has a heart for training God's people for service and desires for all of his leaders in Illinois First to offer training in their respective departments. SNSS also fits his vision because Sunday School teachers are basically being trained for free by being exposed to the various teaching methods and styles of the instructors that the conference call offers every week. SNSS operates under the umbrella of the International Sunday School Department (ISSD) with International Sunday School Superintendent, Bishop Alton Gatlin. Although SNSS is sponsored by Illinois First, the international church has embraced it and Elder Payton is truly appreciative of the tremendous support Bishop Gatlin and the ISSD have given to SNSS. In turn, SNSS wholeheartedly supports the ISSD and encourages everyone to participate in its various workshops and services during the International AIM Convention in Cincinnati.

**Elder Payton makes it clear in saying that SNSS should not**

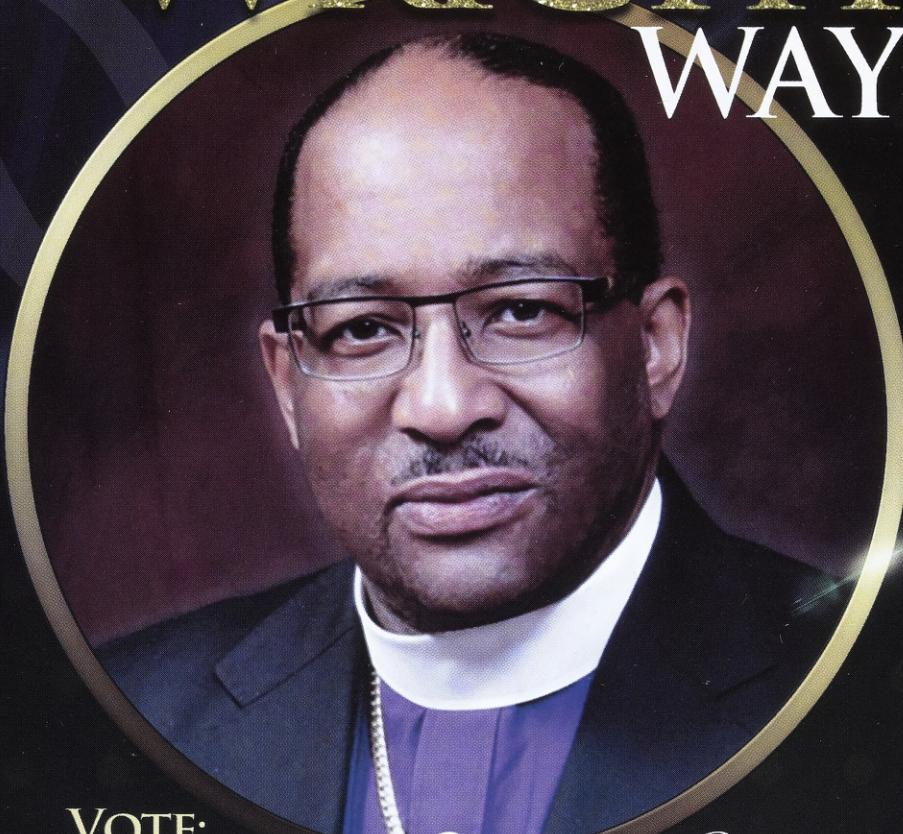
**be used as a substitute for attending Sunday School at your local church.** "It's really to make the Sunday School class even better, where you have a teacher who is anointed and prepared and students who are engaged and interactive. We want to enhance the richness of the teaching, the in-depth study, the analyzing, the using of cross-referencing, the skills and the methods, the curriculum and the instruction piece of Sunday School. So, it is not at all to replace the traditional Sunday School class, but to enhance it, to make it more in-depth, to make it rich, to make it grow, to make it exciting... We know when Sunday School is hot and exciting it just carries right over into the worship service."

When it comes to the success of SNSS, Elder Payton is passionate about who gets the glory: "We're grateful to have this opportunity for ministry. Our focus on SNSS is for the people to be blessed. It's about Him and it's about the ministry and we're grateful for how He has taken it and blessed the people, because our focus has been on the Word of God. Please pray that God continues to get the glory!"

Saturday Night Sunday School can be heard every Saturday at 9 pm (CST) and all are welcome to call in. The conference call number is (641) 715-3580 and the access code is 528863. Saturday Night Sunday School is marching on! **TWT**

Sonya D. Bradford is a member of Deliverance Center Ministries COGIC in Springfield, MA (Massachusetts First). She is also a licensed evangelist and gospel announcer for 90.7FM WTCC.

# VOTE THE WRIGHT WAY!



VOTE:



BISHOP *William S.*  
**WRIGHT, SR.**

for

**GENERAL BOARD**  
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

"Ascended in the church through the Ranks, not by Inheritance"



## THE WRIGHT MAN FOR THE RIGHT JOB! GENERAL BOARD

3rd Generation Son of the Church of  
God in Christ

Husband of one Wife; 42 years, Evangelist  
Debrah S. Wright

Daughter - Kenitra L. Wright

Son - William S. Wright, Jr. / deceased

"Proven Leadership for this Great Church  
of God in Christ"

FOUNDER - Liberty Church of God in Christ; Whitehaven Location;  
July 13, 1990

FOUNDER - Need for Liberty Radio Broadcasts; October 6, 1990

FOUNDER - Liberty Church National and Regional Television Broadcasts;  
June 1, 1995

FOUNDER - Dyersburg Church of God in Christ; February 16, 1997

FOUNDER - BUILDER / W. S. WRIGHT, JR. Family Life Center;  
January 10, 2000

FOUNDER - Liberty Church of God in Christ; East Memphis Location;  
April 21, 2004

FOUNDER - Liberty Church of God in Christ State of the Art Media Studio;  
December 4, 2010

FOUNDER - Tennessee Southwest Jurisdiction; Approved April, 2011

"Many accomplishments are to Bishop Wright's credit that this  
advertisement cannot contain."

# The Whole Truth

INTRODUCES

# teStify!

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.  
—Revelation 12:11

## How I Made It Through

By Vickie Burse

Death is our natural enemy; it is the ultimate crisis. When a person dies, all of their life goals end. For quite some time, I believed that all of my life goals would end after the murder of my son.

My son, Barry Burse, Jr. (BJ) was murdered on July 1, 2013. He was just 19. BJ was just starting his first season of semi-pro soccer and had just completed his freshman year at Lyon College, where he was receiving a full soccer and academic scholarship. On the morning of July 1, 2013, death walked uninvited into my home. BJ had dropped me off at the airport as I was heading to the COGIC AIM Convention in Baltimore, Maryland. Upon landing in Baltimore, I received a phone call stating that BJ had been shot in the chest and was killed. I re-



member screaming and falling to the floor in the Baltimore Airport. As I lay there in total shock, I felt like I was stuck in a bad dream. I remember a young lady rushing to my side. She did not ask me

what was wrong, but she asked me if she could pray with me. She placed her arms around me and whispered the Lord's Prayer.

It took me several hours to make it back to Memphis and as I sat in the airport terminal waiting for my flight home, a young man who looked to be about 14 or 15 years old came and sat with me. He asked if I was okay. I tried to tell him that my son had been killed and I was trying to get back home, but I could not make myself say that he was actually gone. As I sat in tears trying to get the words out of my mouth, he asked if he could pray with me. He and his family made a circle around me and began to pray.

But the power of prayer...

*My son, Barry Burse, Jr. (BJ)  
was murdered on July 1, 2013.  
He was just 19.*

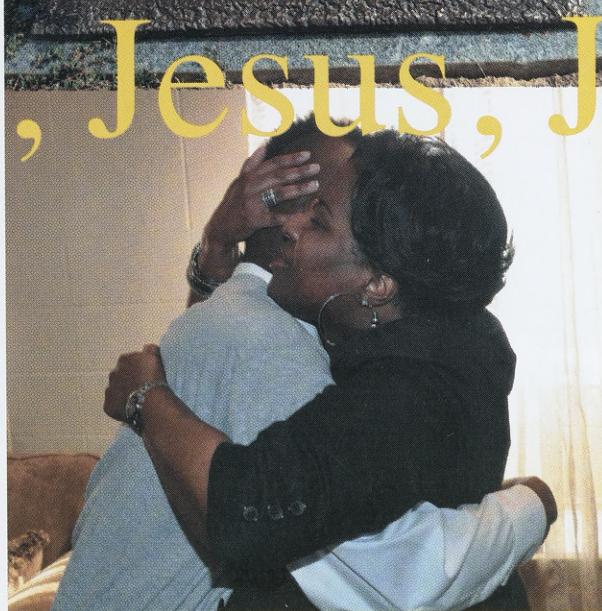


Following the death of my son, I truly felt and even claimed that I was sinking into a deep depression. It was during this time that I realized the power of prayer. I can remember my mother saying to me years before that I had to speak to my mountains and declare the victory over myself. She also told me to remember the promises of God; that He is the God of peace, that what

# 'Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,'

He promised He would deliver; that if I searched for Him I would find Him; that He promised salvation to all who believed in Him; and that all things will work for the good for His children. Her words reminded me that BJ and I were God's children, and that we were the apple of His eye.

On many mornings, I felt as if I was dying a slow death, my heart aching, longing to hear BJ's voice just once more. It was on these mornings that I would simply say, 'Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,' as that was all I could think to say; nothing else seemed befitting. Over time, as I laid there paralyzed with pain, fear, anxiety and anger, I began to hear God speak to me, and He told me to stop focusing on the size of my mountain but rather, focus on the size of my God. I learned that how I responded to the death of my son had a direct reflection on how my



Over time, as I laid there paralyzed with pain, fear, anxiety and anger, I began to hear God speak to me, and He told me to stop focusing on the size of my mountain but rather, focus on the size of my God.

daughter responded.

One of the strangest feelings was that life really did continue after BJ was gone. The sun still rose and set each day, schools were continuing to be in session, people were still carrying on with their day-to-day life, but I felt as if my whole world was ending. I can remember, a few months after BJ was gone, not wanting to laugh or smile too much because I felt guilty that my

life was also going on, and somehow it seemed unfair. I would catch myself laughing or having fun and all of a sudden, I felt as if I was acting too normal.

I never asked God to help me to get over the death of my son, but to give me the strength to get through the day. I asked this every single morning before I got out of bed.

I remember during the trial of the person who murdered my son, seeing the grandmother of the murderer and feeling a strong sense of compassion for her. I wanted to go and try to comfort her. I immediately began to cry and became angry with myself for caring for her, as my son was the one who had been murdered. I remembered again that I had been made in the image of God, so this meant that the spiritual DNA that I received from God caused me to have com-



passion for someone else—even the family member of the person who had murdered my child—during the lowest point in my life.

I am so thankful that God loved me so much that even when I wanted to give up on myself, He was so gracious and loved me when I did not feel worthy. God sent so many angels to speak love and strength over me, to pray with me and to pray for me when I did not have the strength to pray for myself.

God is now directing my steps; I had to learn to walk by faith and not by sight. When I allowed Him to direct my steps, I finally realized that the depth of my past was a clear indication of the height of my future. God used the death of my son to propel me into His loving arms. God loves



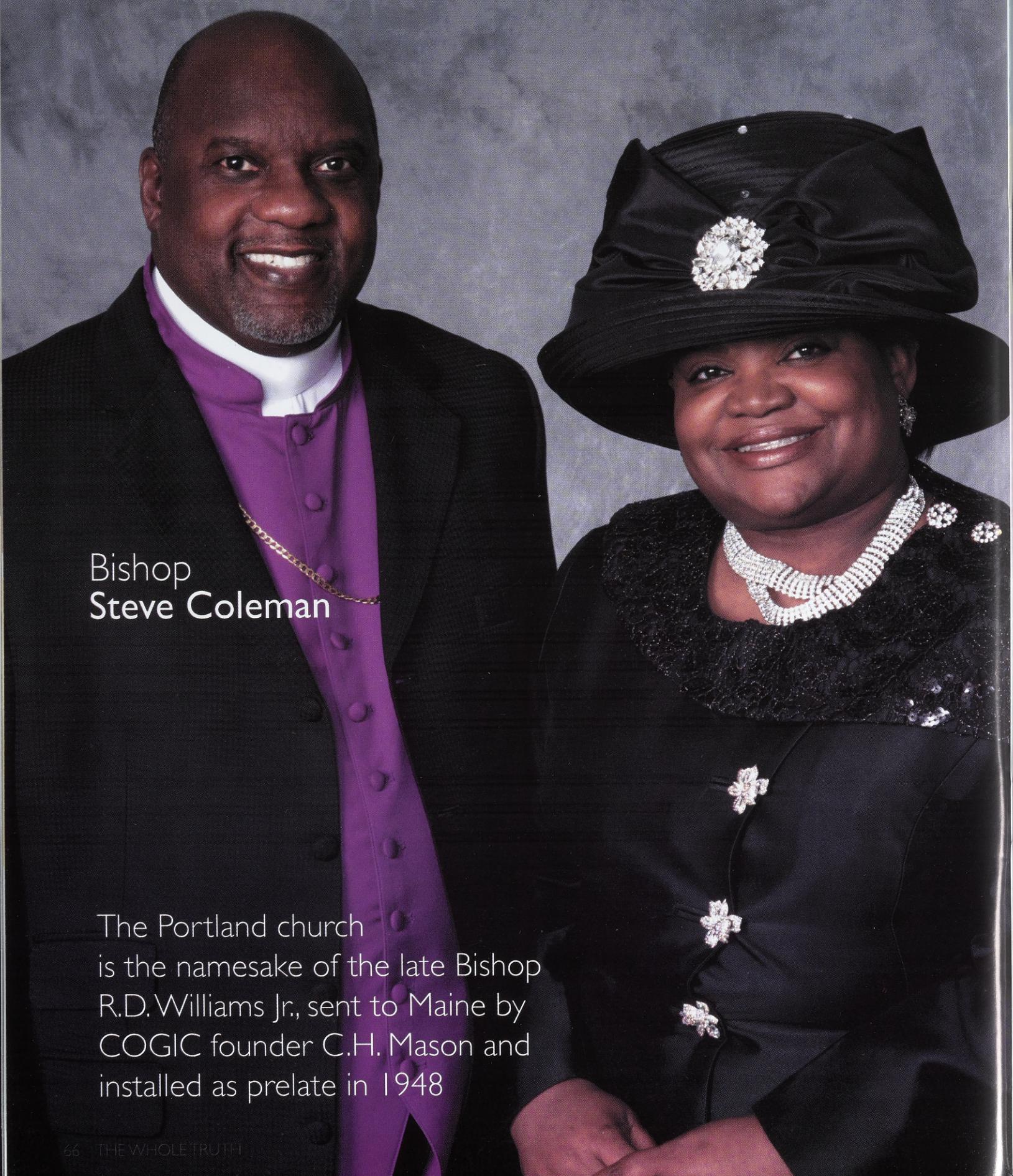
me so much that when I asked Him “Why me? Why did you take my son?” He responded, “Why not you?” God knew that I could handle the death of my son with grace, splendor, and courage. He knew that even when I was at my lowest point, I would still have the strength and wisdom to praise Him and to give Him the glory that

**God knew  
that I could handle  
the death of my son  
with grace, splendor,  
and courage.**

He so deserves for what He has done and is still doing in my life.

**TWT**

Vickie Burse is the COO of the Church of God in Christ Publishing House.

A formal portrait of Bishop Steve Coleman and his wife. Bishop Coleman is on the left, wearing a dark suit, a white clerical collar, and a purple vestment with gold buttons. He is smiling. His wife is on the right, wearing a large black hat with a brooch, a black sequined dress, and a pearl necklace. She is also smiling.

Bishop  
Steve Coleman

The Portland church is the namesake of the late Bishop R.D. Williams Jr., sent to Maine by COGIC founder C.H. Mason and installed as prelate in 1948

# WILLIAMS TEMPLE AND MAINE JURISDICTION PORTLAND, MAINE

By Elder Kyle Huckins, Ph.D.

"M

aine is the whitest state in the Union, and that's not just from the 100 inches of snow that falls across much of it each winter. Caucasians form nearly 95 percent of the population, African-Americans only 1 percent, but the Church Of God In Christ has been a spiritual force in the Pine Tree State for two-thirds of a century.

"I asked God for three things when I came here from Mississippi: my own home, a job and a good church, and He gave me all three," says Lucille Young, the longest-tenured member of Portland's Williams Temple, home to the headquarters of Maine Jurisdiction.

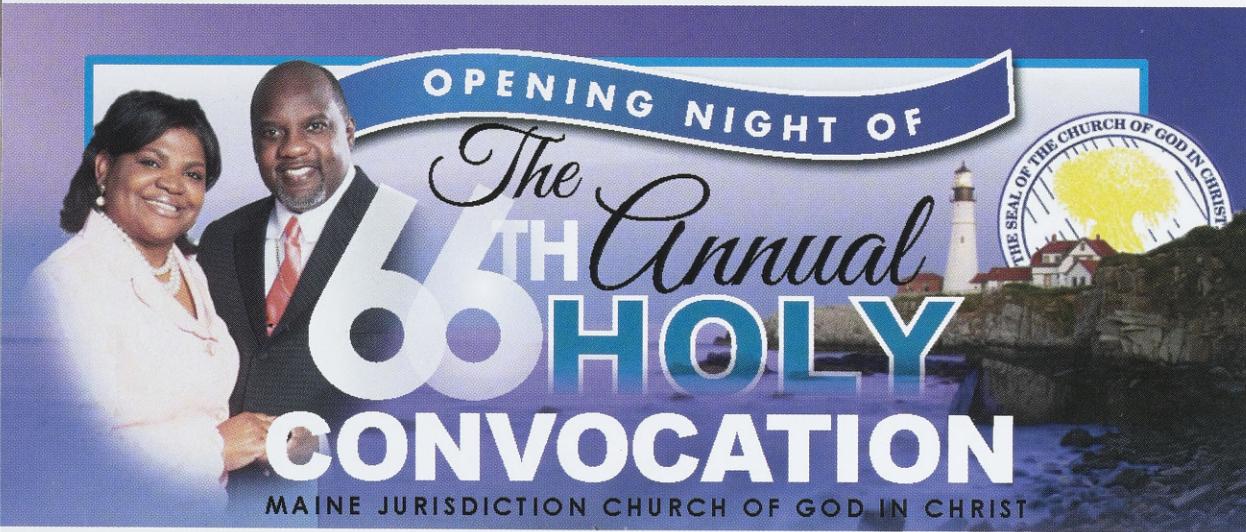
In a place known for its rocky coast and small clapboard churches, the only Church Of God In Christ in the state's largest city is two solid stories and nearly 100 feet high, a project led by Bishop Steve Coleman, now bishop of Maine. The retired paper-company chemist says that "God was helping us" on the building project with architects, suppliers and contractors in pricing, and the congregation quickly paid down the remaining \$100,000 mortgage so that the group of 50-60 on a typical Sunday morning owns its home outright, with no debt.

The Portland church is the namesake of the late Bishop R.D. Williams Jr., sent to Maine by COGIC founder C.H. Mason and installed as prelate in 1948. The widower went first to Bangor but soon settled in the state's southernmost major city, opening what became Williams Temple in 1950. He met his second wife, Louvenia Tillman, at a national church meeting in Memphis. She had a degree from the prestigious New York Conservatory of Music and built the new congregation's music ministry.

Young remembers the prelate as humble, willing to admit fault, and good at healing relational wounds. He would come to people's houses to visit and patch up any problems.

"Bishop Williams was a well-educated man, a well-rounded man," recalls Elder Albert Jackson, pastor of Christ Temple in Auburn, Maine, the other congregation currently in the jurisdiction.

As for Mother Williams, she was a "sharp lady, classy," Jackson says, and enjoyed leading church members in Anglo hymns such as "Onward Christian Soldiers," as well as African-American favorites like "I'm a Soldier in the Army of the Lord." He explains that the Portland



congregation was predominantly Caucasian in the early years, so the Williamses would use a mixture of music appealing alternatively to blacks and whites.

The prelate died in 1981 and Williams Temple was shuttered, due to lack of a pastor and bishop until five years later. At that time, Coleman, then attending the Auburn church, was appointed interim pastor even though he was not yet ordained in the Church Of God In Christ.

Coleman, like virtually all COGIC members in Maine, came from somewhere else, having met the Lord in his native Louisiana at a charismatic Baptist church. He didn't want to be ushered into the ministry, preferring a career path in the professions, but his hometown pastor prevailed on him. "He could see the call on my life, so I submitted to it," Bishop Coleman says.

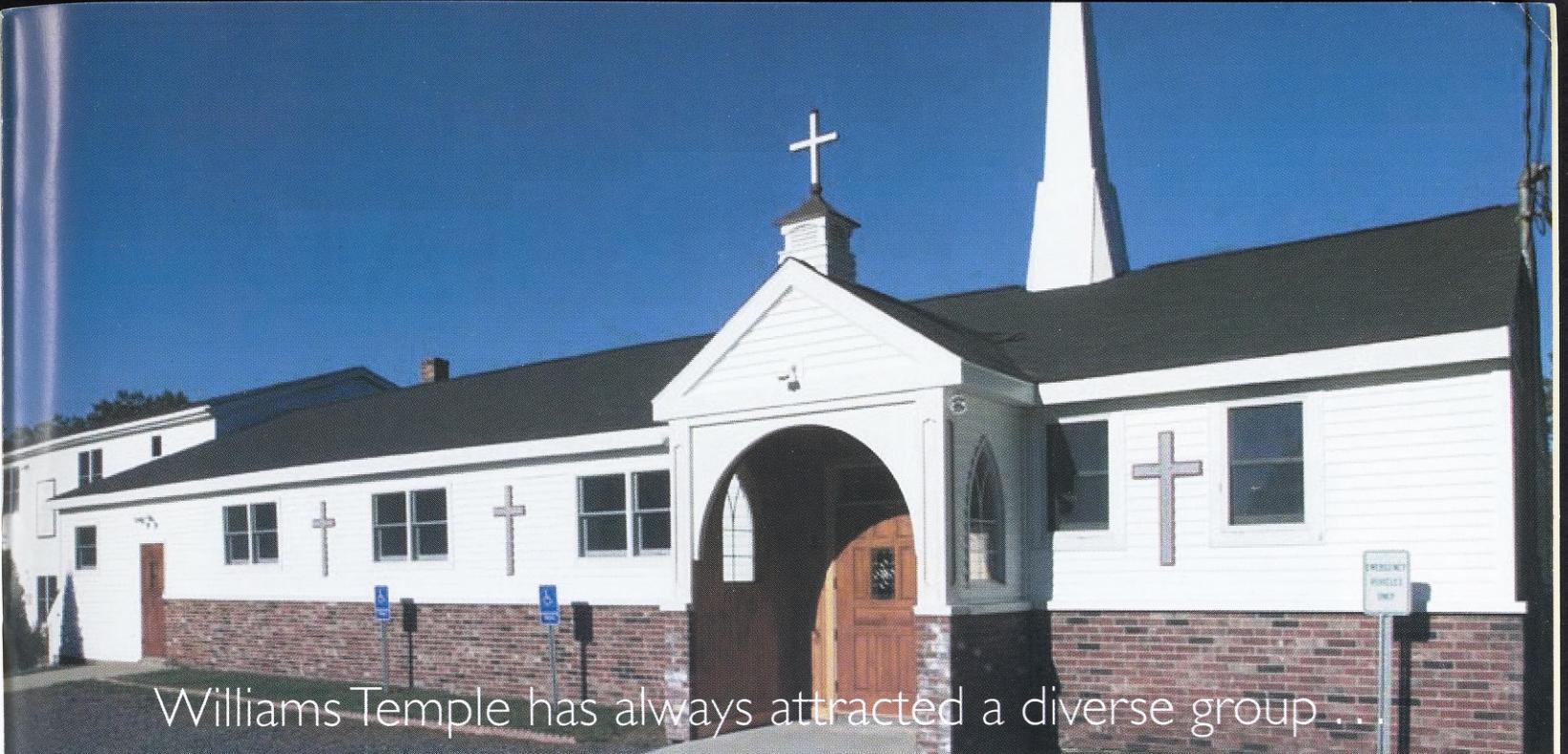
Coleman moved to Portland in the late 1970s after graduating from college, going to work for an employer he was to have for 25 years. Finding a good church wasn't as easy as getting his first job out of school, as he visited other African-American churches in the vicinity but found them generally resistant to the Holy Spirit's present ministry. In fact, Coleman only

became aware of COGIC in Maine when his cessationist pastor recommended he consider coming under a Memphis-credentialed shepherd who had just come north. The sending pastor and Coleman later joked about how the former had "released" the latter into his ministry in

the Church Of God In Christ.

Twenty people came to Coleman's first service as interim pastor, among them Mother Williams and Claire Richardson. The latter had met Coleman after moving from Canada's New Brunswick following marriage to her American husband. Richardson didn't intend on becoming a member, thinking she would just show her support for the newly appointed leader. But she recalls offering her help to him when she saw how much he had to do himself.

"I said, 'I can help you with that,' and 'I can help



## Williams Temple has always attracted a diverse group...

you with this,' and I just never left," she laughs, this year ready, like Coleman, to celebrate her 30th anniversary with Williams Temple. She is his full-time secretary and assists him with administrative tasks so he can focus more on preaching and teaching.

That's not to say Coleman doesn't roll up his sleeves when outside the pulpit. "He very much works alongside of us," says Richardson, citing that as one reason the bishop, installed as prelate in 2004, has been able to stir a strong sense of loyalty among his church members.

Williams Temple has always attracted a diverse group, with Whites, Hispanics and others having attended services, more than 25 nationalities counted in its ranks through the years, and several countries represented today. Not being native "Mainers," members sometime come and go in a short time, due to work and other life changes, but often send tithes back to Portland long after leaving, even for two years, Richardson says.

Not only have the church's people paid off their property, they frequently contribute generously to benevolence and foreign missions. As much as \$10,000 in a year has flowed from them to Haiti outreach by COGIC Elder Horace Pritchett of New Jersey. "I think that's why God has blessed us so much here, that we support missions so strongly," opines Coleman. Others also credit his transparent nature, seen in how he volunteers the unvarnished truth about himself and his church.

Evangelist Cheryl Coleman, Williams Temple's

first lady, works with the eight-member choir, Total Praise, and her son, Jerrod White, keeps the music coming during services as Instrumental Department chairperson. The sound tends toward modern gospel, with a few old favorites thrown in, too.

The church has significant appeal to young people, who have their own Sunday-morning service. They are also touched by Hard-working Youth Pursuing Excellence, a group founded by Bishop and Lady Coleman to address the lack of support in local schools for students of African descent. Youngsters have the Thursday night of each annual convocation of the jurisdiction and not only contribute to the spiritual side of the service, but showcase their talents in speaking, singing and other areas in an event that can attract more than 100 people as an outreach into the surrounding community.

Some of Maine Jurisdiction's leaders recently have either moved or passed away, meaning Bishop Coleman is guiding the group through a time of change. The tidy house the prelate has kept in Portland and across the state speaks to his ability to take care of God's business, say COGIC faithful there, even when the spiritual weather clouds up like the white flakes coming from above. **TWT**

Elder Kyle Huckins, PhD (Southern California First Jurisdiction) is a longtime journalist and educator, as well as author of a new book, "Getting from Here to Eternity: A Spirit-filled View of the News." For more, please visit his website at [www.gettingfromheretoeternity.com](http://www.gettingfromheretoeternity.com).

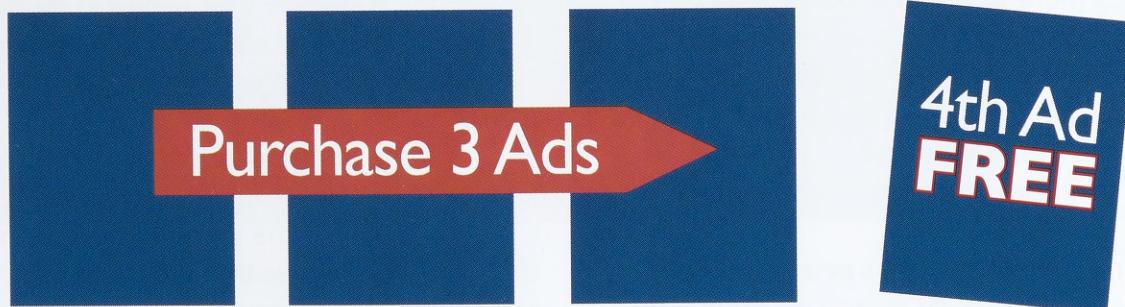
# AD SPECIAL

As we work diligently to inspire and inform our vast group of loyal The Whole Truth readers, sync with us to successfully promote your ministry, business, event, product or service!

**EVERY** pastor, jurisdictional leader, department head and the like is encouraged to advertise their events in The Whole Truth!

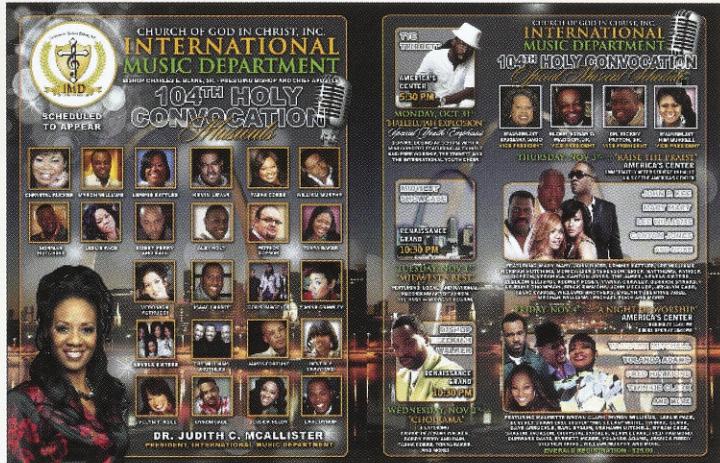
You can purchase a full page ad in one quarterly edition of The Whole Truth for \$250.

**The WHOLE TRUTH DEAL** is you purchase an ad for three quarters, we will give you the fourth quarter for free. That's a full year of advertisements for the price of three quarters. What a Great Deal!

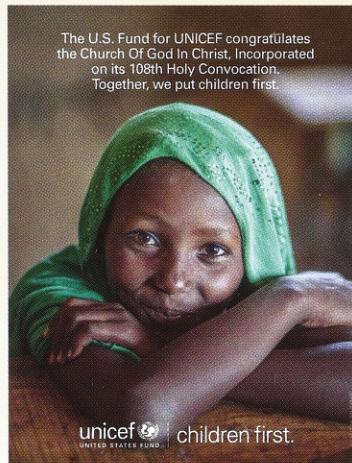


Contact David George Newsome at  
**twtads@cogic.org**

# AD CATEGORIES



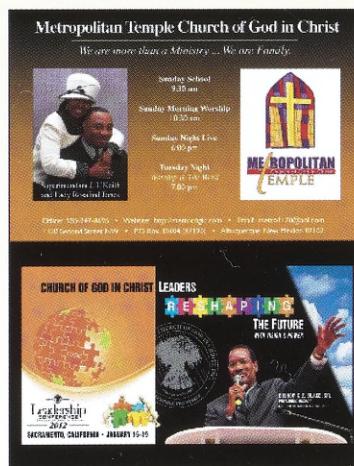
Two Full-Page Spread for a Promotion



Full Page Ad



Two Full Page Ads, side by side



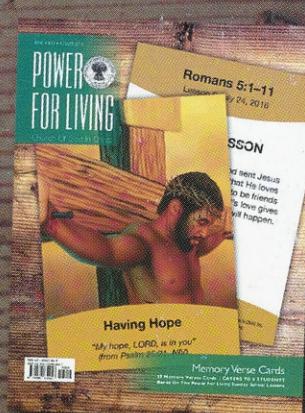
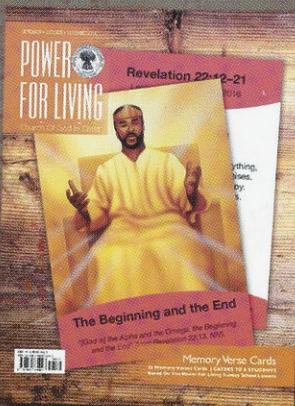
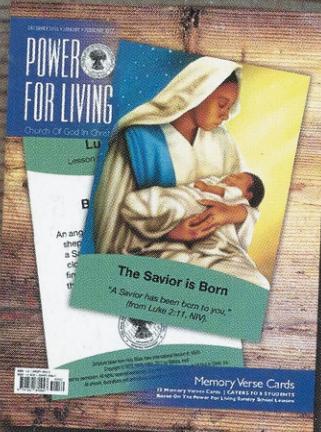
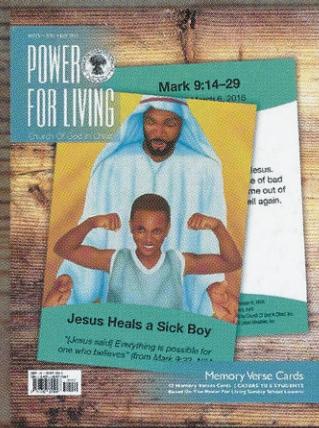
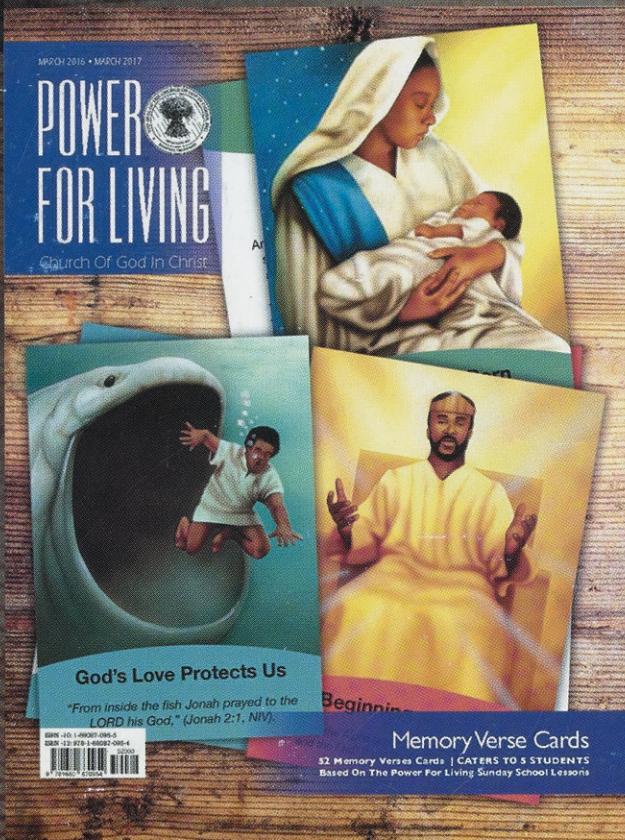
Two Half Page Ads

Become part of the very FIRST and FASTEST GROWING eMagazine that is circulating within the Church of God in Christ .... and beyond!

# AVAILABLE NOW

# COGIC MEMORY VERSE CARDS

## A COMPANION PIECE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL



The Power for Living Memory Verse Cards combine inspirational artwork, key Bible verses, and summarized lessons that coincide with the Power for Living Sunday School curriculum. After each lesson, the memory verse cards can be utilized to reinforce the Bible lessons and remind students of the power and truths of God's Word.

[WWW.COAGICPUBLISHINGHOUSE.NET](http://WWW.COAGICPUBLISHINGHOUSE.NET)

877-746-8578